

**HISTORIC
TOTOWA FALLS**


BY

CHARLES P. LONGWELL

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vicinity

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Historic Totowa Falls

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Historic Totowa Falls And Vicinity

IN ART
LITERATURE
EVENTS

by

CHARLES P. LONGWELL

Pen drawings

by

AUTHOR

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By

Charles P. Longwell

FROM AN OLD PRINT 1761



Dedicated
To
My Gracious Grandchildren

Once more I turn to you and give
Into your hand my little book,
Since through the years, and while I live,
It is to you I still must look
For the hand of strength, for the heart of cheer,
For all that's good and kind and dear.
With true affection and esteem.

To
My Three Grandchildren
Ruth, William and Grace
This Volume
Is
Inscribed
in Testimony of
My Affection and Esteem

PREFACE

In presenting this book to the reader, I have used in whole, or in part, some of the articles that appeared in the old Press-Guardian and the Call. At that time the late editor J. L. Matthews of the Guardian, a friend and neighbor, was enthusiastic about having the articles printed in his paper, put in book form.

I appreciated the editor's view point, for I could see its economy, the type being set, and by making minor changes would cost less. However, I felt I had not fully finished what I considered, a fair cross-section of literature and events, at the historic Falls.

I now present it with the hope, that its contents of educational value, along with the pen sketches will be of entertaining interest to those who read it.

Charles P. Longwell.

FORWARD

This volume is projected with the hope of exciting an interest in the subject of which it treats. With its natural beauty and historical importance the Totowa falls deserves more than a passing glance.

However, most of the writers have passed up the natural and leaned more to the commercial, with the eyes apparently blind to the beauty, and also to the joys and events that have happened here. Most writers have been so immersed in the art of writing from the standpoint of industry and profit only, that the scenic grandeur here through the years, has made itself evident; only as they have opened their eyes and realized it.

There is also a tradition among most writers of historical subjects, that it must deal with the past. The further remote it is from the present the more historical. There is some force in the idea—but one must wait for facts to be dead before the writer can deal with them.

If that were the case, it would have no value for any but antiquarians. The natural beauty of the falls, like other fine natural scenes, goes back for ages, but it is still with us. It has a history, both in art, literature and natural.

Some years ago, I was strongly impressed with the need for writing a book about the falls. Hence a number of my articles appeared from time to time, in the old Press, Press-Guardian and the Call.

The title chosen, "Historic Totowa Falls," admirably fits the subject—Totowa being the aboriginal name. The aim of the book is to give the reader an adequate picture in word and drawings, of the development, the literature and other activities about the falls.

In the chapter "When Washington was in camp near the falls," I have of necessity to go beyond this vicinity. Otherwise, the new chapters that have not been in print, with the old that have been rearranged, and new material added completes the volume.

It is hoped that the book will make fireside reading. Particularly is this so with many families, who treasure the memories of their own grandparents; those who lived in the vicinity of the cataract, when candle-light and ox-cart helped build in a small way, the place called home.

The falls when it was the most beautiful, was as I knew it during all the years of my childhood. I spent many happy days here, and in the valley of the rocks. It was a great holiday for me when my grandfather took me to this spot. I admired the city so often called "Falls City," to which my very own grandfather had come from the town of Whippany, N. J., to live here in 1832. It was he who gave me the story of Sam Patch. He being present at the placing of the first bridge across the falls chasm. I have made use of it in one of the chapters, taken from my little book, *A Little Story of Old Paterson*, published over forty years ago. Now out of print.

Much research has been done to enable me to get this volume together, looking through New Jersey Archives, books of Poetry and newspaper files. I am also indebted to the late Robert Bristol, of Passaic, for a photograph of Lafayette Headquarters in the Goffle; from which I made the pen drawing. To the best of my knowledge some of these pictures have not appeared before. The picture of Stiles Spring is purely imaginary, I following closely the description given by Col. McHenry of General Washington's staff.

I have done but a small part in an interesting subject. There is no doubt about there being much material and traditional information about the falls but owing to the lapse of time, traditions have been forgotten, shall I say neglected, and documents thoughtlessly destroyed. These might have aided greatly in the search for information, that could be translated into history. With the hope that some future investigator or writer may successfully secure whatever material there may be of interest about the falls, located near the center of the city, its ribbed rocks, seamed and scarred through the years; by dashing water, has preserved until recent times, its beauty of long ago. May some writer of the future produce a larger and better book.

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THE FALLS

Chapter One

In a direction southwardly from Totowa over among the rolling hills of Morris county, a little stream bubbles up and goes rippling down the mountainside, mingling at Mendam village with the north branch of the Raritan, where at last it finds a convenient outlet. Growing stronger and broader as it winds around and waters on its way the near flatlands; until, it finds an easy passage through the rifts in the lower hills where it tumbles over the rough formation of trap-rock that is called Little Falls.

Thence the small stream from up country called Passaic becomes more dignified with the full-grown name of river, turns easily along the course that nature has provided; until, at last with one mighty leap and subdued roar, its waters dash upon the rocks and tumble headlong into a basin hemmed in with lofty cliffs, that in bygone centuries some frightful convulsion had rent in twain the gap to receive them.

Here Totowa Falls came into being. Stilled for a moment the waters roll on again, now deep, now shallow until at last, the river winds its way safe to sea.

For some distance above the Falls the river runs upon the trap-rock that forms its bed. The lay of the land indicates that the course of the stream just above the Falls had not always been where it now is. Probably a part of the stream fell in the cleft, later called L'Enfant gap. This gap was filled in to make the new road to Little Falls, on the southside of the river in 1835.

Perhaps the earliest mentions of lands that include the Falls was made in East Jersey under the proprietors and called the place where gum-blocks are procured for grinding corn. The Indian name Haquequemonck which was later spelled Aqacyquinke—now Acquackononk. The deed recorded was given to four Hollanders dated town Bergen, March 28th, 1679, by an Indian, one of the Sachems of the Sanhicans, a tribe of the mighty Delawares, that roamed at will, unfettered, proud and free, over the hills and valleys of this region, stretching for miles in every direction around the spot that is now called Paterson.

In a deed executed in October, 1782, one Day and wife,

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specific mention was made of "The Falls." Thereafter the Falls were noticed in many transfers of land in the neighborhood. In March 1817 Robert Van Houten and wife transferred to Daniel Holsman, the cleft in the rocks through which the river pours was described, as what is commonly called the Tap of the Big Falls. So the locality became gradually known, and now commonly called "The Falls." Another transfer of property by Day and wife to Halmagh Van Giersen 1782, excepts from a division of his lands the two acre piece of ground laying above the Great Falls and adjoining the river, sold to Cornelius Nafee. Nafee was the first proprietor of an inn at the Falls as early as 1770. The place was later the location of the old Fifield Inn.

The early owners of lands in the neighborhood of the Falls must have recognized the facilities that this region afforded for obtaining power for manufacturing purposes. But it is puzzling why they selected a sight above the Falls for their "mill lots," as they called them in property deeds. It is hard to comprehend.

Little did they dream of the mill lots, that in fifty or one hundred years hence, would be practically useless, or to what use in after times the stream would be devoted. At that early date the land around the Falls was wild and primitive, and covered with thick forest trees. The plateau atop the cliff was also thickly grown with huckleberry bushes, which years later were cleared away by T. B. Crane, who obtained possession in August 1827.

Here he built a shanty of rough boards, and a bar was opened for the refreshment of visitors. This first building was just above where the famous Cottage-on-the-Cliff once stood. Crane named it Forest Garden. By making extensive improvements to the grounds, by combining the beautiful with the sublime in nature, rendered this interesting place, a romantic spot still more attractive to visitors. This spot remained as such until the cottage was finally vacated as a pleasure resort in 1890.

The grounds originally stretched in rolling slopes up the crest of the hill, with the Redwoods stretching away to the north. Passing the old stone reservoir that looks like an old time fort, the heights then curved down a little until it reached the old Totowa Road, now at this point called Ryle avenue. As time rolled on it brought gradual changes in the topography of the landscape.

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The first freshet along the river we have heard of was the one in 1810 which carried away the old wooden bridge near the west side of the Passaic Hotel. But the flood of 1854 was doubtless the greatest up to that time, but many other high water marks had previously been reached. On February 13, 1832, a heavy snow fell, and on the evening of the next day a storm of rain set in lasting twenty-four hours.

Says the Chronicle of that day: "The torrents of rain and melted snow descended the surrounding hills with such impetuosity that the hard frozen covering of the streams below suddenly gave way. Massive pieces of ice came tumbling down the great falls of the Passaic and borne on the surface of the rapid current removed every impeding obstacle. All bridges along the river were destroyed or injured and much damage was done."

And on July 10th following heavy rains so increased the volume of water that special attention of out-of-town folks was called to that fact, and editors and papers elsewhere were requested to print the information.

Again on March 22nd, 1837, there was another great freshet which wrought much damage. Subsequently to 1834 the water was again very high in 1860, 1878 and 1895 on each of which occasions there was much discomforture, and inconvenience in the lower lying part of Paterson bordering the river.

In 1878 and 1882 parts of the streets were covered with water, and much damage was suffered by the people, especially in the freshet of 1882, when the flood and consequent damage were much increased by the bursting of the dam of the Big pond at Haledon (Oldham pond). But the great flood following a few months after the disaster caused by the great fire of 1902, broke all prior high water records at the Falls. On these events the Falls were awe inspiring, beautiful but at the same time dangerous.



Lafayette

Washington

Hamilton

1778

Allegorical.

Chapter Two

When Washington was in camp near the Falls

Stories of the visits of Washington to this vicinity are few. Historians have nicely left this section unnoticed in their accounts of his sojourns in this neighborhood. Probably because no military action of importance happened here. But the truth is, that here at the city's western gates, his Army after many months of hard campaigning and disappointments in the outcome of war, sought and found well earned shelter and rest in the Preakness hills.

Washington first camped here in July, 1780. At that time the stay was less than a month, at the Dey House. They had passed through this region two years earlier, for James Thacher, a surgeon in the Army, who accompanied the troops here, gives a fine description of the falls as he saw it at that time. In his diary, dated July 25th, 1778, he said: "Our brigade marched from Short Hills, Jersey, the first of July. I rode with Dr. Tenney and Captain Hughes about five miles to take a view of the Passaic Falls, called by some Totowa Falls, which are represented as a great natural curiosity. The Passaic River runs over large rocky mountains covered with fir trees. At this place an immense body of rock would totally interrupt its passage, had it not been by some stupendous power rent in several places from top to bottom, forming huge clefts, some of which are twenty or thirty feet, others not more than two or three, and from fifty to seventy feet deep. The depth of one of them it is said, has never been ascertained. It is here that the whole torrent of the river falls perpendicularly with amazing violence and rapidity, down a rocky precipice of seventy feet with a tremendous roar and foaming. But being interrupted in its course by craggy rocks, it turns abruptly to the right and again to the left, and falling into huge cavities below, the whole torrent vanishes from sight, but by stepping to another precipice a few yards distance, we behold the same torrent emerging from its subterraneous course and rushing into a large basin containing forty fathoms of water and is never full, but its rocky walls on all sides ascend sixty feet above the surface of the water. Such is the astonishing depth of this receptacle, that the water neither foams nor forms whirlpools by the rushing current, but is calm and undisturbed. From this basin the water rushes through its outlet, reassumes the form of a river and in majestic silence pursues its course towards the sea."

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Other officers on the way from Short Hills stopped at the Falls on the 10th of July, 1778, on the Army's march to the North River. They made a short visit at the Falls before taking up camp quarters at Paramus. Washington, Lafayette and their aides, Hamilton and McHenry, stopped at the old spring. James McHenry gives this account. "After viewing these falls we seated ourselves round the General under a large spreading oak, within view of the spray, and in hearing of the noise. A fine, cool spring bubbled out most charmingly from the bottom of the tree. The travelling canteens were immediately emptied and a modest repast spread before us, of cold ham, tongue and some biscuits, with the assistance of a little spirit, we composed some excellent grog, then chatted away a very cheerful half hour—then took our leave of the friendly oak—its refreshing spring—and the meek falls of the Passaic—less noisy and boisterous than those of Niagara, or the more gentle Cohoes or the waters of the Mohawk."

This (Stiles Spring bubbled up out of the ground, that lies northwest of the old Cottage-on-the-Cliff grounds, then forming a brook ran down to the river just east of the place where, afterwards, the pump-house of the water company was built, near the extreme northerly end of the falls. In the long ago it made a zig-zag course, curving a little, it passed the high piece of traprock embankment which encrouched on the private road of John Stiles land.

Departing from the spring, Colonel McHenry said: "From hence we passed through a fertile country to a place called Paramus. We stopped at a Mrs. Watkins whose house was marked for headquarters. But the General receiving a note of invitation from a Mrs. Prevost to make her Hermitage as it was called, the seat of his stay while at Paramus, we only dined with Mrs. Watkins and her two charming daughters, who sang us several pretty songs in a very agreeable manner.

At Mrs. Prevost we found some fair refugees from New York who were on a visit to the lady of the Hermitage; with them we walked—and laughed—and danced, and gallanted away the leisure hours of four days and four nights, and would have gallanted—and danced and laughed and talked with them until now, had not the General given orders for our departure. We left them, however, in the spirit of modern soldiership without much sighing, in the pursuit of the dangers of war and pleasures of variety."

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On the morning of July 15th, 1778, they bid adieu to the Hermitage. They were up and on the March at 6 a. m., over narrow and stony roads, to Haverstraw, where they ferried over to King's Bridge.

In 1780, heading north after the battle of Springfield, the Army is again in camp at Preakness, but not for long, as Washington learned of the arrival of the French fleet at Hartford, Conn. The Army broke camp on the 25th of July, a little less than a month's stay, and started their march to the Hudson River. On the way they stopped the second time at Paramus, this time only an overnight stop. In the morning they were up and on the march at 2 a. m. They left at this very early hour because on their march on the preceding day, an unusual hot sun beat down upon them, making the men fatigued and foot weary. They arrived at the ferry on August 1, where the General found the whole Army collected at that point. They crossed the river to the New York side.

Washington did not return again to New Jersey until early October. On returning, they stopped first at Teaneck, then on to Paramus, where Washington and his officers stayed the second time as guests at the Hermitage, home of Mrs. Prevost, before returning to the vicinity of the falls.

The journey to the Hudson River completed, Washington left the Army in camp at King's Bridge, on the 18th of September, taking with him General Lafayette and their aides, Col. James McHenry and Col. Alexander Hamilton.

Washington put General Nathaniel Greene in command during his absence. That evening they intended to leave. But in the meantime General Benedict Arnold had in the early evening, come down the river from West Point and met Washington at his quarters before the General left.

Arnold returned the next morning to Robinson House, at that time his headquarters across the river from the Military Academy. The General and his officers journeyed with him as far as Peekskill, where they parted, never to meet again.

Washington and the three officers pressed their journey to Hartford; had an interview with the French commanders, then returning, reached West Point on the morning of the 25th of September. Washington, on leaving Arnold at Peekskill,

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had not the slightest suspicion of his turning traitor. During the General's absence, Major Andre was captured. Officers sent messengers post-haste to find the General and inform him of the news, but unfortunately, he had left Hartford for West Point by another road and they missed him.

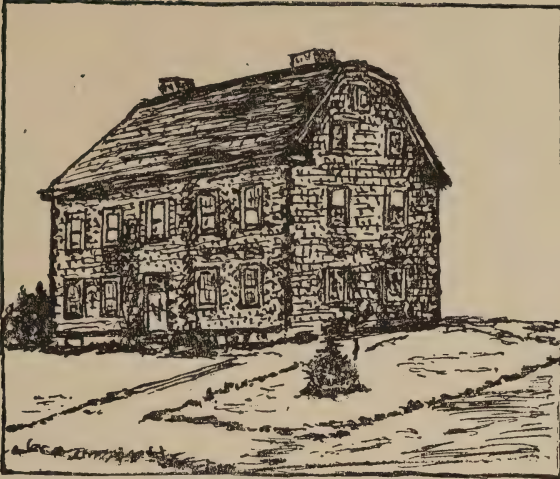
In the meantime, Colonel Jamison made an unfortunate blunder, when he notified Arnold of the capture of John Anderson (Major Andre). The whole plot might have had a different outcome, but for the prompt action of another gallant officer. Jamison, in spite of papers and letters of the treason pact that were found in Andre's boot, sent him with a letter toward West Point. Major Benjamin Tallmage, more patriotically keen, brought Andre back, placed him under guard, but let the letter go its way until it was in Arnold's hands.

The General and his officers had in the meantime arrived in the vicinity of West Point, stopping over night at Fishkill on September 24th, and would be at Arnold's quarters for breakfast. The General, however, turned off the road to the river. He told the two aides of his party to proceed to Robinson House, as he intended to inspect some fortifications. The Marquis stayed with the General. Colonel Hamilton, and Colonel McHenry went on ahead to present the excuses of their chiefs.

Hamilton and McHenry were seated at breakfast with Benedict Arnold. Mrs. Arnold was not there, being indisposed, was in her room. Their conversation stopped as a messenger entered and handed Arnold a letter. When he opened it, he saw the note informing him of the capture of Andre. He hurriedly thrust it in his pocket, and begging to be excused, said: "I have urgent business to attend to. I must confer with General Washington." Then he dashed upstairs to his wife, leaving the table before he had finished reading the note. In a few moments he came down and said: "I will be back in one hour." He mounted his horse and was gone.

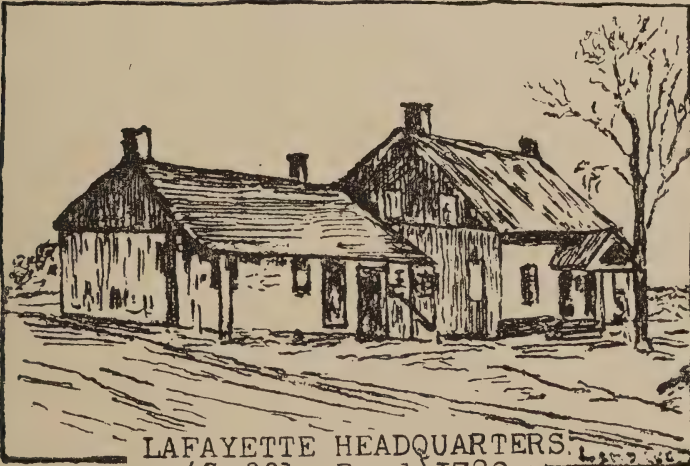
Washington arrived too late. Such strange actions puzzled and disturbed him. Colonel Hamilton was sent in pursuit of Arnold, but soon returned without finding him. Then Lafayette and the General went up stairs to question Mrs. Arnold, whom they found all excited and in tears—a sort of comic, tragic bit of feminine defense of her honor. The pretty little traitoress. Washington who was so good at defining character,

DEY MANSION



WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS 1780

Preackness, N. J.



LAFAYETTE HEADQUARTERS.
(Goffle Road) 1780

The scheme for the capture of Arnold was unfolded to Major Lee by Washington, while he was with Lafayette at Wagaraw, October 13th, 1780.

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and Lafayette so use to the wiles of Court Ladies, were stunned. Mrs. Arnold was not detained. She immediately after journeyed to Mrs. Prevost (later Mrs. Aaron Burr) of the Hermitage at Paramus; where on earlier visits the Continental Army officers were so loyally entertained. Mrs. Prevost was known as a fine hostess and excellent entertainer, although her sympathies were pro-British. She had many qualities of grace and charm. She was a woman well read and cultured in an age when women were not considered in an educational way.

Immediately, Washington informed the Academy with the following note: "Robinson House in the Highlands, Sept. 25th." He writes to Colonel Wade, telling him that Arnold had deserted to the enemy, and placing him in command of West Point.

Five days after the execution of Major Andre, Washington moved the Army out of Tappan. His cattle and horses were weak from the scarcity of forage. So they sought new camping grounds, marching through a pelting rain seeking new quarters and green fields for the animals. In writing to the Continental Congress, he said in part: "My intention is to proceed with them to the country in the neighborhood of Passaic Falls." So it was that the vicinity of Totowa became the place of plenty for his famished stock.

On the 7th of October they were at Paramus, and the following day the Patriots were encamped again at the city's western border. The main camp was upon the level plain about a mile above the Falls and extended from the river to within easy distance of headquarters. Probably two thousand men were stationed here. Here they pitched their tents and made rough huts upon the fertile grassy fields protected in the rear with tree clad hills. In front, the green swarth sloped down to the rippling river.

General Washington was first a guest at Colonel Dey's home, and afterwards took up quarters in the house, occupying southeast rooms as a dining room and office. Here he entertained many distinguished men of the period. The Marquis de Chatellaux, a general in the French Army, said: "I spent several days very happily with Washington at the Dey House, before the Army separated for winter cantonment." Others who visited on official business were Generals La-

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fayette, Greene, Knox, Colfax, Wayne, Colonels Burr, McHenry and Hamilton.

The house still occupies its commanding site in the lower Preakness valley. Aside from its historical interest which attaches the place, one will find much that will amply repay in the beautiful scenery surrounding it, and along the roads leading over hills and through picturesque lowlands. It stands back of the first mountain, where the surrounding hills made a natural defense, and Washington appreciated this fact.

Washington's headquarters are indeed legion in the State and in some portions of the country. Identified spots where he slept are so thick along the Atlantic seaboard as to force the inference that he slept all the time, except when he was picking hickory-nuts—his one weakness. We regard the sneer and incredulity visited upon their claims for such honor, as highly unreasonable. Considering the length of the Revolutionary struggle, the ever-drifting position of their forces, it is not strange then, that many a farmhouse in those days should thus be consecrated for all time by the presence of the Commander-in-Chief and his officers. The State has rightfully been called the cock-pit and warpath of the Revolution.

Most of the fighting was done on Jersey soil. The open level lowlands and the wooded hills between New York and Trenton was the camping grounds for both Armies. Like players on a chess-board, back and forth they moved to gain their points of military advantage, between the north and south, in retreat and advance.

In the same year, General Anthony Wayne was stationed for a short time at the Dey House. This was July 28th, one week after his attack on the block-house at Bull's Ferry, near Bergen Neck. Major Andre describes the incident in his poem, "The Cow Chase," said to be modeled after an old English ballad called Cheve Chase. This was published August 1, 1780, in the Rivington Gazette of New York city. The poem is long, containing three cantos and seventy-one stanzas—the last stanza:

*"And now I've closed my epic strain
I tremble as I show it,
Lest this same warrior drover Wayne
Should ever catch the poet."*



PROVOST HOUSE (The Hermitage
at Hohokus.

Favorite stopping place of Washington and his officers,
during his campaign in New Jersey.

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How prophetic are his words, for it was but a short time after it was written that he was captured as a spy, and to this the height of irony! It was also this same Anthony Wayne who was guard at his execution.

While here the Commander's flag flew first at the Dey House, three miles away, then at an old Dutch farmhouse that stood on a knoll at Monument Heights, near the farm of Colonel Horne. Benjamin Horne was a lieutenant in the first New Jersey regiment, then transferred to the third New Jersey regiment and served until 1781, retiring as captain. He was later made a colonel.

Afterwards the flag flew at the old Godwin House (Passaic Hotel), now demolished. The old building faced a park fringed with large trees, where in old times festivals were often held. All this neighborhood from Bank street to the river, is swallowed up in the city's growth. The small-paned windows of the old Inn looked out over streets short and narrow, that radiated from the old park that used to be, a reminder of days that are no more.

In these old buildings in the vicinity of the Falls, many important letters were received and dispatched by General Washington, his officers and others in Continental authority. While there was much moving about, back and forth in the five years of war, yet 1780 was an eventful year. Like all the war years, it was one of apprehension, worry and discontent among the rank and file. The problem uppermost, food, clothing and shelter.

The battle of Springfield, the last major engagement in New Jersey, was one of the decisive ones of the Revolution, due to the fact that it ended warfare in the State. As a matter of record there were few operations in the war which bore so directly upon the safety of the Colonial Army. The British had the additional support of Hessian soldiers, a much larger force of well drilled men, but did not press their advantage, owing to the sharp resistance of the Continentals. These men seemed to come from all quarters. So the enemy beat a hasty retreat after setting fire to the village.

Shortly after midnight they reached Elizabethtown point, and by 6 a. m., they had all ferried to Staten Island, leaving New Jersey for good. This battle in June, 1780, helped the Patriots' cause. The conduct of both armies indicated an appreciation of its importance.

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In speaking of this engagement, General Maxwell, in writing to Governor Livingston, said: "Never did troops either Continental or militia, behave better than ours did. Everyone that had an opportunity, which they mostly all had vying with each other who could serve the country best. In the middle part of the day the militia flocked from all quarters and gave the enemy no respite till night closed the scene. At the middle of the night the enemy sneaked off, and put their backsides to the Sound, near Elizabethtown."

Jersey soil was indeed the strategic center of the war for independence, and when the enemy ceased fighting here, it enabled Washington to throw his strength to the south, which led to ultimate victory at Yorktown.

Nothing occupied so much attention while in camp in the vicinity of the Falls, as the treason of Benedict Arnold. At the Dey House, plans were made for his capture. The desertion of Arnold uppermost in the mind of Washington, moved him to suggest to General Clinton, an exchange of Andre for him. Sir Henry replied that it was beneath the dignity of the British military to think of it.

Before Andre was executed at Tappan, Washington conferred with Major Lee, later called "Light Horse Harry." "I have asked you here," said the General, "to discuss a project of the utmost delicate and hazardous nature. If you have in your corps two individuals capable and willing to undertake it." What else was talked over, only Lee and Washington knew.

This scheme for the capture of Arnold was unfolded to Major Henry Lee, while he was with Lafayette at Wagaraw, in the Goffle, October 13th, 1780, at Lafayette's headquarters.

A few days later John Champe was selected by Major Lee to effect the capture of Arnold. After the meeting at Tappan, Lee suggested his plan in a note to Washington, saying Sergeant John Champe was to desert, a thing the young man did not care to do, not because of the fear of the danger, but the hypocrisy of going with the enemy. Champe was to join the British forces, get in touch with Arnold and at an opportune time, finish this mission.

It was at 11 o'clock at night that Champe mounted his horse and stole out of camp near Tappan. His absence was

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discovered a half hour later by Captain Carnes, officer of the day, who reported the incident to Major Lee in his tent, he having retired for the night. The major knowing the seriousness of the situation, prolonged the conversation, and to gain time, he told Carnes to go and get Lieutenant Middleton to come to his quarters. He arrived in about ten minutes. "Lieutenant I want you to obey the following order." He repeated it slowly, "Pursue so far as you can with safety, Sergeant Champe, who is suspected of deserting to the enemy, and has taken the road leading to Paulus Hook. Bring him alive that he may suffer in the presence of the Army; kill him if he resists or escapes after being taken."

A little over an hour had elapsed before a detachment of men followed, under command of Cornet Middleton, officer of Dragoons. These men did not know that they were sent on this chase as a feign, to make the desertion seem real, so the British would not suspect. Major Lee was very uneasy, lest they catch and kill the gallant Champe. One hour seemed too short a time to make a successful getaway. It was raining heavily when the detachment left, so it was easy for them to follow him along the muddy road.

Middleton had planned to catch him by sending part of the pursuit men to a place called Three Pigeons (New Durham), about four miles north of Hoboken, and the others to keep on the Great road to the bridge over Mill Creek. But his pursuers lost track of him when he dashed off the road after passing through the village of Bergen, into thick woods. When he neared Elizabethtown point, he dismounted and left his horse at the water's edge, then swam out in the bay where a boat picked him up and brought him to the British ship that lay off shore. Major Lee was under the circumstances, to hide his joy, when the pursuers returned to camp without him. They only had the sergeant's horse and sword scabbard.

Headquarters Preakness, Friday, Oct.
20th, 1780.

"The plan proposed for taking A—the outlines which are communicated in your letter which at this moment, put into my hands without a date—has every mark of a good one—I therefore agree to the

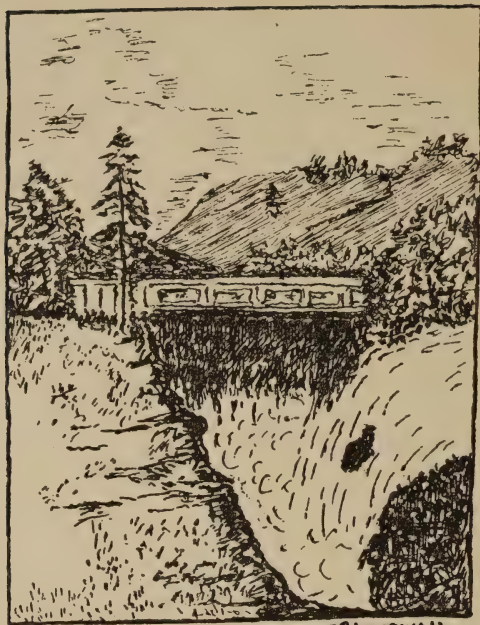
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promised rewards and have exclusive confidence in your management of the business as to give it my fullest approbation and leave the whole to the guidance of your sure judgment with this express stipulation and pointed upon how that he A— is brought to me alive. No circumstances whatever should obtain no course to his being put to death—the idea which would accompany such an event would be that ruffians had been hired to assassinate him—my aim is to make a public example of him—and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off."

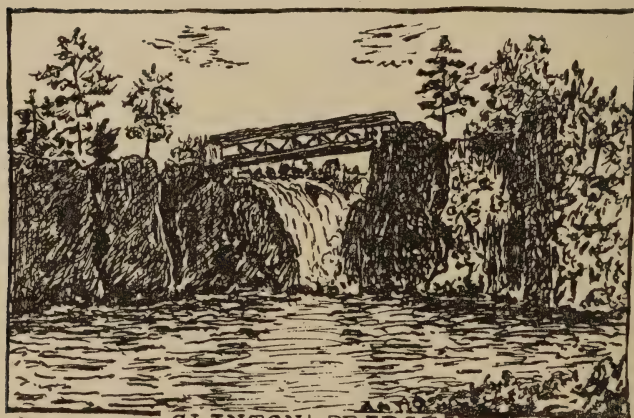
Washington to Major Lee

The capture of Arnold was arranged for the night of November 5th, but on that day, unfortunately, Arnold had moved his quarters, and the legion in which Champe was placed shortly afterward sent to Virginia. Champe finally escaped near the close of the war and rejoined his old regiment, Virginia Legion with Lee, but Washington released him so he would not fall into the hands of the enemy and be put to death.

On the 27th of November, Washington's presence in this vicinity ended. He writes to Congress, Nov. 28th, Morristown, "Arrived at this place today, having yesterday broken camp near Passaic Falls, and detached the troops to their different places of cantonment." The Army left the field for winter quarters, the Pennsylvania line, staying at Morristown, the Jersey brigade to be at the cove near Pompton, the New York regiment at Albany, and the New England line stationed at West Point.



"TIM CRANE" bridge
first bridge 1827
From John Reid's photograph



CLINTON BRIDGE
From T. W. Whiteley's picture painted in 1835.

CHAPTER THREE

The Falls in Art

Early in the 18th Century when the wild and rugged nature of the Passaic Valley was not disturbed by the clattering of looms, and the native Indian of the Delaware tribe was won't to roam at will over hill and dale, unmolested in his natural environment. He listened to the falling water of the cataract as it fell over the precipice. The rocks were overhung with a dense growth of trees, through which the sun's rays had difficulty in penetrating. Off to the southwest the bold outline of Garret Mountain showed against the horizon, with its growth of Cedar trees through which the sunlight appeared in a purple haze.

On the highest point, the first glint of the morning light fell, and whence the eye looking to the northwest sees far up the valley a silver thread of water winding toward the chasm that is waiting to receive it in its dark depths. This was the natural barrier to the future city that was to lie at its base. In the leaping of the river into the chasm of rock, and to the observer from up stream, seeming to disappear, dropping into the river bed passing between tremendous walls of traprock, sheer and smooth from summit to base in a narrow, clean cut rift through which the pent-up, boiling torrent is shot with tremendous velocity, clear out into an elbow of the rock, and thence sharply turned on itself, churned and curdled into masses of cottony flakes. The course of the river thus forms an acute angle at the immediate fall, that it very much resembles the form of the letter Z. The top arm representing the stream above, the inclined fall of water to the chasm into which it plunges, and the lower arm and the course the current takes after passing out of the angle.

Picture this spot as the Indians knew it before 1680, up to which time no whites had known the falls. The Indians named it Totohaw, which means to sink, or be forced down beneath the water by weight. The Indian name Totohaw, like many of their names and places, is strong in poetic feeling. Though they are gone, this name remains with us of an ancient race. To the Indian, falling water was one of the lordly, living features of the earth. Here the Delawares had their lookout points from which they could survey the surrounding country. They knew the marvelous rainbows which formed above the cataract, and the beautiful glen called

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the Valley of the Rocks, where hundreds of wild flowers grew in great profusion.

The great Falls of the Passaic have a history as romantic as the great Niagara. Before the railroads had come to take the place of the stage coach, the Falls was visited oftener than Niagara, which was then far removed from civilization. There is no doubt that the Passaic River cataract was seen by more tourists prior to 1824 than Niagara.

Like a deep cup, nature had fashioned the steep ledges of the traprock and hid it by a dense growth of foliage, to attract the visitors, with its charm and picturesqueness. Although the Falls vary much in grandeur, they are always of exceeding interest to the lover of the picturesque. In years gone by, there stood a little lookout tower on Manchester Heights, from which a fine view of the lower valley and town was spread before the eye.

On the edge of the rocks, in later years, on the Falls ground stood the Cottage-on-the-Cliff; nearby was a rustic stairs, and a little farther on, the high cliff, Cannon Rock, was another. The stairs led down to the Valley of the Rocks, then a wild glen. These steep cliffs, rising above the valley, clad in a wealth of trees and shrubs.

Most of the history as expressed in the art and literature of the Falls is handed down from an earlier time, when its natural beauty was not marred by industrial advancement; then the artist, poet or romantic writer had nothing but the true natural surroundings with all its rustic nature to feed the imagination.

Probably one of the first white men to see the country surrounding the Falls of the Passaic, was Lieut. Gov. Pownall. He saw the beauty of the wilderness and found it to be a perfect treasury for the artist. He was an artist of repute from a surveyor's standpoint and made drawings and surveys for King George the Third, but he was not an adept colorist. It was Paul Sandby, a well known water colorist of the 18th Century who produced excellent work from Pownall's drawings about 1740. His print in colors of Passaic Falls is a valuable addition to the art of old times.

The outlines of the picture are entirely different from the Falls' picturesque contour at the present time. It is prob-

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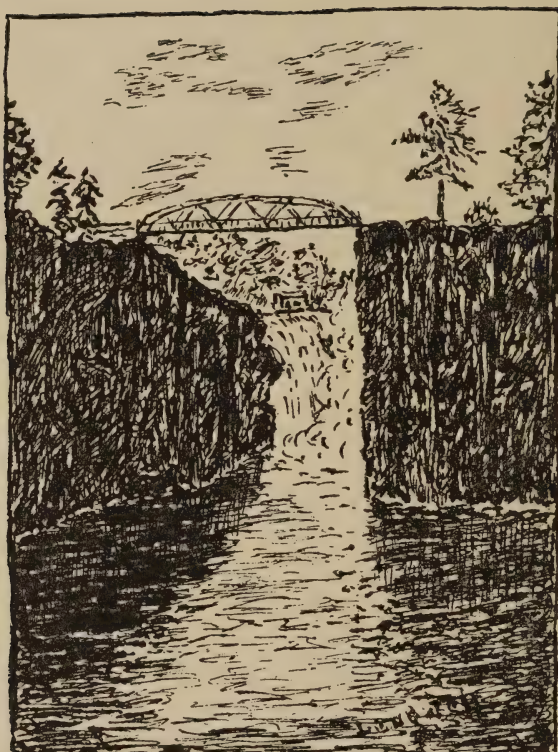
ably truthfully outlined in so far as the wealth of foliage is concerned, but it is not likely that the rock formation had undergone such a change in two hundred years.

It may be well to give a little sketch of Paul Sandby. He was a famous caricaturist at the time of the great Hogarth. His caricatures on Hogarth display skill in composition as well as a large amount of wit and humor. Sandby was indeed one of the original members of the Royal Academy. His art was much admired in his own time. He was a native of Nottingham, England, where he was born in 1725. But his fame rests mainly on being the founder of the English School of water color painting, since he was the first to show the capability of that material to produce finished pictures, and to lead the way to the perfection in effect and color to which that branch of the art has since attained. His death is usually placed, but erroneously, in 1732. He died on the 7th of November, 1809.

Coming down to more recent times we find the Falls to be the popular subject for artists. A drawing of the first and only covered bridge to span the chasm, was made about 1830, by J. Sands. This picture is often seen in prints engraved by a celebrated engraver, W. H. Bartlett. The first bridge, a wooden one, was not a covered one. This was called the Tim Crane bridge. I think it is unknown in painting. But photographs of this first bridge (1827) were made by the late John Ried, noted as an artist in photographic work. It is fortunate some of these old pictures are preserved for posterity.

In 1830 Paterson had a local artist of considerable genius who kept an art store on Main street, and gave lessons in painting. He was T. W. Whiteley who painted a number of valuable pictures of local interest. His painting of the Falls and Clinton Bridge is one of his best. A picture of the Falls painted in oils, by Louis Kieffer, a landscape painter, who had a studio at 19 Clark street. This picture was painted about 1870, and is of interest for it shows very plainly the old pine tree at the top of the cliff. It was near the side of this tree that Sam Patch made his jump in the chasm basin.

*Where the rocks are gray and the shore is steep,
And the water's below are dark and deep;
Where the "Sam Patch pine" in its lonely pride*



From Louis Kieffer's painting
the third chasm bridge

Picture made about 1870



From Julian Rix painting
done in 1888.

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*Leans gloomily over the whirling tide,
Where the winds are asleep and the glorious deep
Outspreads like a mirror of silver and gold,
Reflects the soft light of the queen of night
And the stars with their shadows are playing so bold
Till the quiet march of the hand of time
Shall meet and part in the midnight of crime.*

Another picture we have seen very little of, is the picture of the Passaic Falls basin; the work of a French artist, Jules Tavernier who made his home in America early in life. This picture was engraved by Alfred Harral, and appears in a finely illustrated book, "Picturesque America." This piece of art work by the French artist, shows the old foot bridge at the end of Mill street, crossing the river to the Valley of the Rocks. It was painted about 1865, and is supposed to be the only picture of the old foot-bridge familiarly known as the John Ryle bridge. It was constructed by the water company to make the pumping station more convenient for its working men.

Jules Tavernier was born in 1844. He was a French painter of merit, who, after the Franco-Prussian War, drifted to America and eventually settled in San Francisco. He painted a great many pictures of American Indian life, and his landscape sketches are very fluent and painter like. He, like many others with the artistic temperament, was typical Bohemian. He died in Honolulu in 1889, unable to meet a law, the requisites of which, insisted upon the payment of all bills incurred by visitors before leaving the islands. So Tavernier's remains were buried there, and a monument was placed on his grave by his friends who admired him as an artist, as much as for his social gifts.

And last, but not least of the artists who have given us pictures of the Falls, is Julian Rix, one of our great landscape painters who had a special liking for New Jersey scenery. He was a self-taught man who knew no academic school of painting, but worked out his own individuality as a master of colors. He had a particular liking for delicate colors, especially greens and browns soft in texture, which is evident in his work.

The finest picture I ever saw of the Falls from an artistic

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point of view, was in the old Kinne building on Van Houten street where Mr. Rix had his studio. It was a studio anyone would enjoy visiting. Being a man of robust proportions and of a jovial disposition as most heavy men are, he made one feel perfectly at ease in his sanctum. Mr. Rix had the honor of having one of his paintings accepted by the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington, D. C., his subject being a New Jersey landscape study, "Pompton Plains," painted in 1898. It is a large canvas and occupies a prominent place in the gallery.

Mr. Rix was born in the village of Peacham, Vermont, in 1850, and in early life, he, like Tavernier the French artist, Thomas Moran and many others of the craft, went west to display his ability in San Francisco, and humorously said, "to draw the walls with drawings." Here he worked successfully at his art. He being in the west when the Nevada gold rush was on—the famous Comstock lode. He and artists of greater and lesser light, were all successful in selling their work, for money flowed like water.

From 1862 to 1875, fifteen thousand miners were employed in the underground mines at Comstock. Stocks listed at \$12 a share in 1872, in less than one year, jumped to \$500 a share, making rich men overnight. In 1875 the famous San Francisco Palace Hotel (Bonanza Inn) was built. It was the most glamorous and luxuriant hotel in the country, probably the world, at that time. One of Mr. Rix paintings "November Days" was purchased and placed on the wall in the sumptuous lounging room of this hotel. Here also were paintings by the famous artist Albert Bienstadt. The building and its art treasures were destroyed in the great San Francisco earthquake.

Julian Rix returned east in 1873, and in 1882 set up his studio here. First making his residence on Water street, at the time a beautiful thoroughfare. In 1883 he opened his studio on Van Houten street, near Main, and about 1895 he located on Church street.

With his cheerful manner and delightful conversation ability, he made many friends, among whom his most intimate ones, were members of the Ryle family. Mr. Rix was a frequent visitor at James Dunn's art store on Market street. On one occasion he was looking about the store when a young man of artistic temperament came in and presented to Mr.

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Dunn a long list of colors he wanted. Jimmie, who had a gift of Irish wit, scanned it. Looking up, he called, "Oh, Mr. Rix, I have a young man here buying a long list of colors." "Well, what about it?" chuckled Mr. Rix. He paused a moment, then said: "If the young man stays at art work long enough, two or three colors will be all that is necessary."

He passed away at his Church street home in 1903. Had he lived, he undoubtedly could have filled the niche left vacant by George Innes, the great American landscape painter, who also admired New Jersey scenery, which scenes he painted in a number of his famous canvases.



At Passaic Falls in 1840.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Falls in Poetry and Story

It is well said that nothing in nature is ignoble. Its music is great music; its poetry is word music often set to score; and all men and women receive some little reflection of what they behold, through sight and sound. But it is only the few that understand what we all see and hear, and they give to us the beauty of it in art, song and story.

The tall gray rocks that tower above the Passaic River on either side, even though they are lacking, at times, in the beauty of falling water, have called forth in muse, story and picture, that art we call literature. Through this gorge the river goes tumbling along through the rapids on its way to the sea. At the top of the Falls cliff, on the southside of the river, there stood in 1840, the old Fifield Tavern, a place where many well known people enjoyed the aromatic savor of the pines and the roar of the cataract. This building, a frame structure, was destroyed by fire many years ago. This was no doubt, the building at an earlier date, kept by a man named Cornelius Neefie.

Philip Freneau, poet of the Revolution, mentions it in his poem "Timothy Taurus," as follows: "Well arrived at the Falls, I procured me a bed. In a box of a house—you might call't a shed!" Mr. Freneau in his humorous poem, goes to some length in the story of a journey made to the Passaic Falls in August, 1775. At that time this shed, as he called it, probably to make it rhyme, was the first inn at the Falls, having been built by Cornelius Neefie in 1770, and advertised as a resort for sight-seers, in New York papers, to wit:

New Jersey, May 1st, 1770

"The Subscriber begs Leave to inform the respectable Public, That he hath, at much Expense constructed a large, elegant and commodious House at Passaic Falls for the Entertainment of Travellers in general, and Parties in Particular; where they may depend on being served with every Thing in the best Taste that his rural Situation will admit of, which for Variety of curious and entertaining Objects, is equalled by no other Place in any of the neighbouring Provinces. And in Order to facilitate the Enjoyment of such a great Number of the most exquisitely delightful Curiosities, he hath erected

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a convenient Stage, with a careful and obliging driver, who will set out at 9 o'clock in the Morning, on Monday the 21st Instant for Powles-Hook, where he will arrive about 4 in the Afternoon, and return the next Day. He will set out again on the Friday following, and return on Saturday at the same Hours. This Service he will continue to discharge with the utmost Fidelity during the Summer Season. The Price to Passengers is 3s for going, the same for returning, and for those that are taken up or dropped by the Way, 2 Pence each mile.

Whatever Encouragement this undertaking receives the Public may be assured, that it will be gratefully acknowledged by its

Very humble Servant,
Cornelius Neefie.

N. B.—A good Cook, Man or Woman, may meet with Employment to by applying to the Subscriber."

There is also a little bit of rhyme connected with the old tavern (Fifield) that later stood on the same spot among the pines. It was written by an unknown writer, and it runs like this:

*"On the top of the cliff, not far away
Stood good old Fifields Inn.
To get there, the old folks use to say
Was worth a pint of gin,
For they had to climb a hundred steps
With many a rest between,
Before they reached that pleasant spot;
Beside the flowing stream.*

G. Haywood made a fine lithograph picture of the Falls in 1840, showing the old Fifield place. There is some truth in climbing this ladder attached to the side of the cliff, for it was a hard climb to get to the tavern. It was an excellent excuse for the travelers to have some toddy to brace them up after the climb.

Then we have a beautiful word picture of the Falls from the pen of the famous Washington Irving, in his poem "Passaic Falls." Irving, when a young man, spent much time in his leisure moments strolling along the Passaic and attending social functions. It was at this time of his life, no doubt, when

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his poetic instinct brought forth the poem "Passaic Falls." Geoffrey Crayon's favorite resort in his youthful days was at the home of a friend, Gouverneur Kemble. "The county box" called Mont Pleasant willed by a member of the Gouverneur family to Gov. Kemble, the intimate of Irving and host to the famous "Salmagundi set".

We can imagine how glad this group of young Literati were to leave their offices in dingy New York buildings on Saturday afternoons in the summertime and seek Kemble's peaceful retreat on the Passaic. There Christopher Cockloft, Aunt Charity, and the whole of the interesting Cockloft family, were created by Irving and his friend in the early days of the last century.

The old house stood on the banks of the Passaic, near Newark, until about 1850, a venerable mansion beloved by the reading world as Cockloft Hall. Irving had pictured the Falls betted than any writer of his time, and we might say of the present, too. The man who wrote the Knickerbocker History and the story of Rip Van Winkle, speaks of the Falls as:

*"In a wild tranquil vale fringed with forests of green,
Where nature had fashioned a soft sylvan scene.*

and goes on to say that it was

*"The retreat of the ring-dove
The haunt of the deer",*

this was the scene that Irving saw in his young manhood, when he wandered through the vale of the Valley of the Rocks where

*"The wild floweret blossomed, the elm proudly waved,
And pure was the current the green bank that laved."*

The poem is based upon a legend about the origin of the Falls which was current among the Indians. At that time a few redmen were still at home in the nearby hills, pursuing their habit of fishing and hunting. Irving says:

*"But the spirit that ruled o'er the thick tangled wood.
And deep in its gloom fixed his murky abode,
Who loved the wild scene that the whirlwinds deform
And gloried in thunder and lightning and storm.*

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With a far-seeing eye he foretold the conditions that would come to pass in the future, when civilization's grasp would make itself manifest in this rustic spot; when the wilderness would show its nakedness for lack of foliage. How true and prophetic are the poet's words when he says in the closing stanzas:

*"Countless moons have since rolled in the long lapse of
time,
Cultivation has softened those features sublime;
The axe of the white man has lightened the shade
And dispelled the deep gloom of the thicketed glade.
But the stranger still gazes with wondering eye
On the rocks rudely torn, and groves mounted on high;
Still loves on the cliff's dizzy borders to roam
Where the torrent leaps headlong embosomed in foam.*

On one occasion only, it is believed, in these delicate stanzas to the Passaic Falls, some lines descriptive of a painting by Newton, and a theatrical address once pronounced by Cooper at the Park Theater, New York, has he ever put his pen to verse. So the Falls is honored as the only bit of nature ever described by Irving in poetry.

Some of the older people know that tradition still persists that one Cornelius Van Winkle, scion of one of the pioneering families of this region, inspired Washington Irving with the title for his ever-popular tale, "Rip Van Winkle." According to an old story, it relates that the old Dutch church records of Totowa, a village antedating, but not included in the present city of Paterson. Cornelius was born in the now vanished Van Winkle home, on the corner of Main street and Broadway, in January of the year 1785.

In later life he became a printer noted for excellence in his work with his office in downtown New York. In May, 1819, he brought out the first numbers of The Sketch Book, as a model of the printing art, a book of excellent typography. This series of stories was not completed until September, 1820. The first installment was in two papers, "The Wife" and "Rip Van Winkle. The others followed. They attained such success that a well known publisher paid Irving a fixed price, with royalties. Then issued the completed Sketch Book. So these stories like Frank R. Stockton's, of a later date, were put under

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one title and were an instant success. As Irving's personal friend and private publisher, it is related that the great author often had recourse to the solid and sensible old man for suggestions and advice. Having written his story of the Cats-kill hunter and imbibor who awakened after twenty years of sleep, Irving was in an undecided mind, trying to find a suitable name for his celebrated character. In this state of mind, he dropped in on his friend Cornelius, only to find him in a deep sleep, with his feet on the desk, snoring lustily.

Prodding him, Irving at last succeeded in awakening him. Then he put to him the question uppermost in his mind. "You want a name for the old beggar?" responded Mr. Van Winkle, with a good-natured yawn—"Well, call him Van Winkle, after me."

"Do you know, parried Irving, "that while you were asleep there in your chair, I could not help seeing that your mouth was wide open like a great rip across your face?" "Bright idea," enjoined the publisher, "call him Rip Van Winkle." And so it was. In the olden days of Paterson, one of the street's was named Rip Van Winkle avenue (now Belmont), running from Hamburg avenue up the hill to Oldham. It is doubtful if another town in the country has a street of that name. It was changed to Belmont avenue simply because an amusement park of that name was at the upper end of the avenue. Evidently it was more important than the name of a great masterpiece in literature. The park has long since vanished.

If Irving was alive today, a similar story might be written about Cornelius Van Winkle. He would search in vain for the little red school house, the open spirit of hospitality, the picturesque stage coach passing down Bridge street (W. Broadway) to Godwin House; then the toll-gate on the turnpike, and of course, his favorite inn.

Yet, through all the changes that have taken place down the years, the old man would still find his kin, the Van Winkle's occupying homes here, along with their neighbors, the Van Saun's, Van De Bilt's, Vreelands, Van Wagoners, and the Van Houtens. Time has not diminished their sturdy stock. This is one of the places in which they settled and is ever proud of their heritage.

Another poet who dealt in the muse of the Passaic River

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was a Dr. Ward, of Newark, N. J. While we cannot call his work in the true sense, poetry, yet we find his name in the index to the World's Best Literature. Was it wealth or influence that placed him there? This little book of poetry by Dr. Ward is accountable for the bitter criticism of no less a person than the sweet singer, Edgar Allen Poe. With his wonderful sense of the harmony of melodious verse, he hated the rhymes of Mr. Ward and let loose his power of satiric invective on the poor poet's head. In the poem called "The Great Descender," telling of the adventures of Sam Patch, the jumper of falls, Poe gets in his bitter word assault of the book. As many at that time knew the character of Patch, it is surprising that Dr. Ward should seek to add his name to the muse. But he did, and this is the manner in which he describes him:

*"From his drenched hat the spray-drops gather low,
Drip one by one far down the gulf below;
Like tears they seemed, that 'scaped his bended head—
Alas: the only tears he shed.
His care-worn features wild, and fevered tinged
Bespoke a soul ambitious fire had tinged.
High resolutions flashed from every look,
And trying thoughts his rigid sinews shook;
As if some mighty purpose swelled his mind,
Big with results to science and mankind,
No murderer he, that shunned the meed of crime—
No madman loose, nor madder child of rhyme:
No: 'Tis the Great Descender, Mighty Patch!"*

The admiration for Sam Patch, by Dr. Ward was undoubtedly inspired at the time Patch jumped into the chasm, at the celebration of the placing of the first bridge across the basin. Of the poetic effusion Poe has this to say: "The Great Descender!" We emphasize the poem merely by way of suggesting that the Great Descender is anything else. We never could understand what pleasure men of talent can take in concocting elaborate doggerel of this order. Least of all can we comprehend why, having perpetrated the atrocity, they should place it at the door of the muse. We are at a loss to know what right, human or divine, twattle of this character is intruded on to a collection of what professes to be poetry.

We put it to Mr. Ward, in all earnestness, if the Great

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Descender which is a history of Sam Patch, had a single attribute, beyond that of mere versification, in common with what even Mr. Patch himself would have the hardihood to denominate a poem. Mr. Ward is pleased to call Mr. Patch a martyr of science.

That Mr. Patch was a genius we do not doubt, so is Mr. Ward, but the science displayed in jumping down the falls is a point above is. There might have been some science in 'jumping up.'

Poe was somewhat vain about his own creations, and nothing another poet did reached the top notch of expression, as did the work of this erratic critic. Though Poe dipped his pen in gall and lashed with a critical mind, yet Mr. Ward owes as much to Edgar Allen Poe, for his reputation as to his honest, if forceless verses on the river he sincerely loved. The following are a few lines written by Mr. Ward, describing the Falls:

*When rocky troubles barred thy tide,
Tossing thee rudely from thy path
Till though wert wrought to foaming wrath,
Nor when the iron hand of fate
Dethroned thee from thy lofty state,
And hurled thee, with a giant throw
Down in the vale—where far below,
Thy tides, by such rude ordeal tried,
With purer, heavenlier softness glide."*

Here the poet, in speaking of the tide, is picturing it before the Dundee dam was built. At that time the tide water came up to the Falls basin. Thomas Ward was born in Newark, N. J., June 8th, 1807. He was educated at Princeton, and received his degree as a physician at the Rutgers Medical College. He pursued the profession, however, but a short time. Foreign travel and the engagement of the man of wealth with the literary amusement of the amateur author occupied his attention, after some skirmishing with the muse, and a number of more laboring contributions to the New York American and Knickerbocker magazine, he published the volume of poems in 1842, which included the foregoing lines. Mr. Ward died in 1873.

In more recent years we have a few others of remarkable literary talent, who have thought it worthwhile to picture

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the river and Falls in verse. One was Fitz James O'Brien, the poet and writer, who came to this country from Ireland in the early part of the 19th Century, and made his home in New York city. He was a hale fellow well met, a regular Bohemian in character. In 1853 to 1858 he was one of the most valued contributors to Harper's and Harper's Weekly. His famous story "The Diamond Lens," published in the Atlantic Monthly in 1858-59, was a new style mystery story. A dashing story that set a pace in the fiction of the period, for its unusual power and style of delineation. Only a limited edition of his collected works are in existence, edited by William Winter.

His poem, "By the Passaic," was first published in Harper's Magazine in May, 1857. It is also included in "American Familiar Verse," by Brander Mathews. Fitz James O'Brien died in early manhood, being only a little over thirty years old. His death was caused by a wound he received while serving in the Union Army. "By the Passaic" is a bit of verse which should appeal to all disciples of Isaac Walton.

*"Where the river seeks the cover
Of the trees whose boughs hang over
And the slopes are green with clover,
In the quiet month of May.
Where the eddies meet and mingle
Babbling o'er the stony shingle
There I angle
There I dangle
All the day.
Oh, 'tis sweet to feel the plastic
Rod with top and butt elastic
Shove the lines in coils fantastic
Till like thistle down, the fly
Lightly drops upon the water
Thirsting for the finny slaughter
As I angle
And I dangle
Mute and sly. etc.*

Margaret E. Sangster spent a happy part of her girlhood days in Paterson in the early 50's. Part of her education was received here. Her autobiography "From My Youth Up," is very refreshing and inspiring. Those who are interested in worthwhile things; things concerning the town would enjoy

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it. She attended the Misses Rogers select school, Passaic Seminary, located on River street, near the old Passaic Hotel. The three teachers were sisters of the late Dr. Alexander Rogers. The school was one of the early private ones in this vicinity, and continued its usefulness until 1864. The plain frame building in the fifties was surrounded by a large plot of ground that ran down to the river's edge.

The following excerpt from the book recalls to mind the days when nearly all the home owners along the river front had a boat anchored near the stone steps leading to the water's edge. It was then a pleasure to row on the river, or fish anywhere along the stream from the Falls basin to Dundee. Miss Sangster said, "We could glance out and see little boats sailing up and down, and we loved to think of the river never hurrying, never resting, tumbling with headlong swiftness indeed, over the rocks at the Passaic Falls. Where the river flowed past our door, it was deep, smooth and clear. In my girlhood I finished a poem "The River," the germ of which came to me as I sat in the schoolroom and watched the waves I loved.

This poem is in nine verses, of which I quote the first:

*"Far up the mountain the river begins
I saw it a thread in the sun.
Then it grew to a brook, and through dell and through
nook,
It dimpled and danced in its fun.*

In journalism, reviewing, manuscript reading, as editor, author and above all, as poet, Mrs. Sangster was successful in all of these, but was known and loved by her "verses," as she termed them, more than any other work that goes to make up her literary personality. She passed from this life in 1912.

Among those who must not be forgotten are three well known Patersonians, Mr. William P. Tynan, who wrote a poem to the river, contained in his book, "Three Score Poems." Mr. John A. McNab's book, "Songs of the Passaic," and George L. Catlin, who published a book of poems while U. S. Consul in Zurich, Switzerland, called "The Postilion of Nagold," and other poems. Mr. Catlin also wrote the words to the song "Over the Hills to the Poor House." It was written for, and sung by the late James W. McKee, a well known local minstrel of early days. Older town people will remember this character song.

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Mr. Catlin says of Switzerland, "Certainly no poet ever found a country more prolific in theme for his verse. The very spirit of poetry seems to hover over its verdure clad mountains. He also found time to think and write of the dear old river at home in the following lines:

*"Ah! fair Passaic softly winding
Through wooded slopes and banks of green,
With all thy loveliness reminding
Of scenes in dreamland's dim
Full oft along thy grassy border
I've strolled in admiration lost,
Or watched thy waves in wild disorder
Within yon rocky chasm tossed.
And Yet, from that abyss, all surging
With foam and spray and torrents wrath,
I've seen thee, purified, emerging
To seek anew thy seaward path.
And onward thence, through landscape rarer
Than painter's brush could e'er portray—
No mortal eye hath looked on fairer—
Thou passest on thy peaceful way.
Till in the blue and hazy distance
Thou gleamest like a silver thread,
Oh River: type of man's existence,
In thee life's lessons may be read."*

Rev. Oliver Crane, D.D., L.L.D., in a collection of verse published in 1889, called "Rock of the Passaic Falls," the title of the book is *Minto and Other Poems*. This poem is in nine verses, but one verse is sufficient. It is as follows:

*"Rock where the many come
Viewing the water's foam
On thee I stand;
'Tis of thy chasm walls
Where the mad torrent falls
command,
That thy Passaic name
Claims an undying fame
In every land."*

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Oliver Crane, the clergyman and author, was born at Montclair, N. J., in July, 1822. He aided General H. B. Carrington in the preparation of "Battles of the Revolution," which has become a standard work. His L.L.D. degree was given him mainly in recognition of the scholarship evinced in his translated version of Vergil's Aenied. His life was a very active one, including as it did, various literary works and extensive traveling in Turkey, Egypt and Palestine.

It is not more than once or twice a year that the Falls of the Passaic ordered by the uncontrollable forces of nature, escape from the chains of the giant utilitarianism, who has bound them to his service and appear in their pristine freedom and majesty. When they do this, they present a spectacle worth crossing the continent to see, such an attitude they present at times. It's no wonder, then, the Falls had such a fascination in the early days; a charm that led many of our now famous men and travelers to linger along what was then a pure and pellucid stream.

Travel in those days was tedious and slow, yet the Falls had not been neglected by the early sojourner who had to travel here by stage, very often finding the coach ready to start and every seat taken, both inside and outside. They were constrained therefore, to take up their position on the top, surrounded by a charming variety of luggage, comprising bags of apples, a side of pork, boxes both great and small, strings of onions, baskets and hand-boxes. Then with a long and tedious ride before them, they finally reached the piazza of this old tavern—Godwin House, tired and weary. From the tavern they either found their way to the Valley of the Rocks, by way of Totowa Road where they had the pleasure of climbing the rustic stairs to the cliff or going by way of the Spruce street cut.

Washington and Lafayette had visited the Falls and Valley of the Rocks many times. The earliest date recorded was 1778. This date, together with their names, was cut in a large rock that lay at the foot of the gully. While the Colonial troops were stationed at Totowa in 1780, many visits were made to the fascinating scenic spot.

The Marquis de Chestaleux, a major general in the French Army under Count de Rochambeau, visited the Falls on Nov. 23rd, 1780, while on his way to visit General Washington,

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then quartered in the Dey House at Preakness. The following is an extract from his book—"Travels in America." I left Mr. Galvon sitting down to dinner and went to prepare my horses that I might get to headquarters before the day was spent. Colonel Mac Henry, whom I had before mentioned, took upon himself to conduct me. We kept along the river which was on our left. After riding two miles we came in sight of the left of the Army. It was encamped on two heights and in one line, in an extended but very good position, having a wood in the rear and in the front the river, which is very difficult of passage everywhere except at Totowa Bridge." This old bridge was a little removed from where the present (West Broadway) bridge crosses the river.

The earliest account of a tragic death was noted in the papers in 1819. This incident is recalled so often that it is merely mentioned briefly. A young, beautiful and accomplished woman, only two months married, who had climbed the stairs leading to the cliff overhanging the basin, fell in the chasm below. The old Dutch people stoutly held to the belief that the groom pushed his wife off the rock. This tragedy was also set to poetry in the muse of Thomas Ward.

A book recently published, called "An Aristocratic Journey," being letters of a sojourn in America in the years 1827 and 1828, by an English woman, Mrs. Basil Hall, who describes her impressions of this vicinity. In the book we find this interesting bit about the Falls: "May 27th, 1828. After dinner we drove six miles further to Paterson a manufacturing town which had sprung up within the last dozen years in consequence of the convenient supply of water for the various mills. But this barbarous application of the water has very much impaired what we want to see, the Falls of the Passaic.

They are still, however, well worth visiting and the scenery around is very beautiful, but I have no genius for description. There is a very curious cliff in the rock down which the water falls. When we returned to the inn for tea we found Mr. and Mrs. Colder had rode out to join us, and we spent the rest of the evening most agreeably as in a warm climate, walking on the bridge, or sitting with all the windows and doors around open, drinking quantities of iced lemon and hot tea. It's quite a Cockney place crowded with Saturday and Sunday visitors. This morning after breakfast we walked

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to the opposite side of the Falls and sat down for two or three hours, under the shade of the trees conversing with Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Colder, who have always something to say worth listening to."

On the verge of the meadows where the Passaic winds its way through tall marshgrass and marshmallow, there was a waterlogged canal-boat moored to the shore at Rutherford—no particular incident in this alone to give it interest, but from this antiquated tub was gradually brought together an interesting novel, a humorous book, "Rudder Grange." When it was finally put in book form, it was a best seller in the 80's. It was first published serially in Scribner's Magazine in five separate installments, each appearing under a different title.

At the time the story was written Frank R. Stockton, its author lived in Rutherford, N. J. William H. Boardman, a friend of Stockton, figured on the Boardman's by his visits to their home, the outcome being the delightful humorous story. The book had a certain foundation in fact, and was partly suggested by the canal-boat mentioned; that lie rotting on the shore of the nearby Passaic River. The maid-servant of the family was drawn from life. As he sat at work in the dining room on summer evenings, he could hear her reading half aloud her novelette of high life exactly as she is described in the book.

Stockton had a distinct charm of manner and was fortunate in imparting that quality to his work. In *Rudder Grange* Mr. Stockton mentions the Falls as the place for Pomona's wedding trip, as he well says, it being about as cheap a place to visit as any of the interesting points of nature in the country. By giving us this book, which is said to be the experience of himself and friends; he produced a story that is still widely read, and equal to his "The Lady or the Tiger." In speaking of the Falls, he said: "We couldn't afford to take no big trip and yet we wanted to do the thing up jus' right as we could, seeing as you had set your heart on it an' as we had, too for that matter. Niagry Falls was what I wanted, but he said that it cost so much to see the sights there that he hadn't money to spare to take us there an' pay for all the sight-seein', too. We might go, he said, without seein' the sights or, if there was any way of seein' the sights without goin', that might do, but he couldn't do both. So we gave that up, and after thinkin' a good deal, we agreed to go to some other falls,

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which might come cheaper, an' maybe jus' as good to begin on. So we thought of Passaic Falls, up at Paterson, an' we went there, an' took a room at a little hotel, an' walked over to the falls. But they wasn't no good, after all, for there wasn't no water runnin' over 'em. There was rocks and precipicers, an' direful depths, and everything for a good falls except water and that was all bein' used at the mills. 'Well Miguel,' says I, 'this is about as nice a place for a falls as I ever see, but—'

This trip might have been in August, but when ever it was, the author saw enough humor, as well as the industrial side in looking over the landscape. So the two characters departed, saying, "Well, neither of us didn't care to stay about no dry falls, so we went back to the hotel and got our supper, and begun to wonder what we should do next day."

Stockton had a pleasant knack of getting his characters into ludicrous situations by a series of perfectly natural steps.

A few miles beyond Garret Mountain lies the town of Montclair. Along side the rock which is part of the Wachung Mountains, the historical Great Notch road stretches away in the distance. At Montclair dwelt John Habberton, where he wrote "Helen's Babies." The book, while not the best in a literary sense, is still a delightful book. He brings to us those illustrious youngsters, Buddy and Toddie, the babies, to the Falls for a day's outing, and in so doing gives a fine description of the Great Notch road leading to Paterson; although the sky line of New York City has considerably changed since he wrote it. It is as follows: "Bring it to me, and tell the coachman to get ready at once to drive me to Paterson. The screwdriver was brought and with it I removed the lock, got into the carriage, and told the driver to take me to Paterson by the hill road—one of the most beautiful roads in America. 'Paterson!' exclaimed Budge, 'Oh, there's a candy store in that town, come on, Toddie.'

"'Will you?' thought I, snatching the whip and giving the horses a cut. 'Not if I can help it. The idea of having such a drive spoiled by the clatter of such a couple.' Away went the horses, and up went a piercing shriek and a terrible roar. It seemed that both children must have been mortally hurt, and I looked out hastily, only to see Budge and Toddie running after the carriage, and crying pitifully. It was too piti-

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ful—I could not have proceeded without them, even if they had been afflicted with smallpox. The driver stopped of his own accord; he seemed to know children's ways and their results, and I helped Budge and Toddie in, meekly hoping that the eye of Providence was upon me, and that so self-sacrificing an act would be duly passed to my credit. As we reached the hill road, my kindness to my nephews seemed to assume greater proportions, for the view before me was inexpressibly beautiful. The air was perfectly clear, and across two score towns I saw the great metropolis itself, the silent city of Greenwood beyond it, the bay, the narrows, the sound, the two silvery rivers lying between me and the Palisades, and even, across to the south of Brooklyn, the ocean itself. Wonderful affects of light and shadow, picturesque masses, composed of detached buildings; so far distant that they seemed huddled together, grim factories turned to beautiful palaces by the dazzling reflection of sunlight from their window panes, great ships seeming in the distance to be toy boats floating idly; with no sign of life perceptible, the whole scene recalled the fairy stories read in my youthful days, of enchanted cities, and the illusion was greatly strengthened by the dragon-like shape of the roof of New York's new post office, lying in the center of everything, and seeming to brood over all.'

As the story moves along Uncle Harry is kept busy looking after the youngsters' welfare, and he has troubles of his own trying to keep them within the bounds of safety, as you will note: "We drove to the Falls. Both boys discharged volleys of questions as we stood by the gorge, and the fact that the roar of the falling water prevented me from hearing them did not cause them to relax their efforts in the least. I walked to the hotel (Cottage on the Cliff) for a cigar, taking the children with me. I certainly spent no more than three minutes in selecting and lighting a cigar, and asking the bar-keeper a few questions about the Falls but when I turned, the children were missing, nor could I see them in any direction.

"Suddenly, before my eyes, arose from the nearer brink of the gorge two yellowish discs, which I recognized as the hats of my small nephews, then I saw between the discs and me two small figures lying upon the ground. I was afraid to shout, for fear of scaring them if they happened to hear me. I bound across the grass, industriously raving and praying

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by turns. They were lying on their stomachs and looking over the edge of the cliff. I approached them on tiptoe, threw myself upon the ground, and grasped a foot of each child. 'Oh, Uncle Harry!' screamed Budge in my ear, as I dragged him close to me, kissing and shaking him alternately. 'I hunged over more than Toddie did.' 'Well, I-I-I-I hunged over a good deal, anyhow,' said Toddie in self defense." Helen's Bablies attained great popularity in America and Europe after its publication in 1876. Today it is seldom read.

CHAPTER FIVE

Happenings at the Falls

In the hills of Morris County, near Mendham, a little stream bubbles up from a spring, and rippling down the hillside to Mendham it finds a convenient outlet; an easy passage through the rift in the lower hills, where it tumbles over the rough formation and widening as it flows along. For miles it turns easily along its course that nature has provided; until, at last with a mighty leap and roar its waters dash over the rocks at the great falls, tumbling headlong into an abyss seventy feet deep. Here hemmed in by lofty cliffs, churning and twisting in its narrow confine it finds the outer basin where it is stilled for the moment in a deep shallow, before it reaches the rapids where it again turns impatiently, swiftly on its way. At high water it is a beautiful spectacle with a cloud of mist rising from the plunging water forming prismatic colored rainbows in the chasm.

In the early days it was called "Top of the Big Falls." But the Great Falls of the Passaic is commonly called, The Falls. Two hundred years ago the land at the falls was in a primeval state, covered with evergreen and deciduous trees. Even at a much later date the slopes and rocks about the Cottage-on-the-Cliff were heavily wooded. The ground stretched in rolling slopes up to the heights beyond the Cottage, and then curving down a little it met the old Totowa road. Now called Ryle avenue. But time has rolled on, bringing changes so gradually as to be almost unnoticed. Even the majestic cliffs in some places have been cut away, or covered over by unsightly debris. The former beautiful scene defiled.

In August 1827 the falls proper became the property of Timothy B. Crane. Soon after he came into possession of the falls, he set to work and built a bridge across the chasm. This was the first bridge to span the cleft in the rocks. That day in September when the wooden bridge was ready to be placed across the chasm, was made a gala day in the village. It being Saturday the mills were shut down in the afternoon, so the citizens could celebrate the event.

Among those who came in for a share of the celebration was Sam Patch who lived in the village, and was employed as foreman in one of the cotton mills. He was mentioned in

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an earlier chapter. It had been noised about town that Patch intended to jump into the Falls basin from the highest cliff, near the old pine tree. Up to this time no one had attempted the feat. Realizing this the town constables were on hand looking for him, to prevent his carrying out his threat. He eluded them successfully however, and was in the crowd of onlookers.

The happiest man in town that afternoon was Timothy B. Crane, who had supplied the money for the venture, and also superintended the placing of the bridge. Mr. Crane at the time was a tavern keeper who kept a small place on the Manchester side of the falls, near the red woods. His place was popular as a resort for circus men. Among those of that fraternity who stopped there, were men famous in the long ago such as Dan Rice the clown, and James Cooke the great bareback rider. Shows exhibited on the falls ground as early as 1825, and continued from time to time until 1835. They also played in the triangle square called Passaic Garden, in front of the Godwin Tavern.

But those who wished to go to the Crane Tavern had to go over Totowa bridge, near Godwin Tavern, then walk to Manchester Heights and through the redwoods.

Mr. Crane built the bridge primarily to compete with his rival Fifield, who kept a tavern on the opposite side of the falls chasm. He was getting the benefit of the Jacob's Ladder, as it was called, and it being nearer town was reached more quickly. This ladder or steps ran from the gully to the top of the cliff. This gap was later filled in forming that part of Spruce street leading to the falls bridge. It was a long rustic winding stair made of rough logs, with the stair treads trimmed down smooth. Before the ravine was filled in all travel was over old Stony Road to Little Falls. When this road was first made it was only a narrow passage way through the gorge of traprock, and on either side a dense growth of trees and brush. The old Tollgate house, a one story building was torn down to make way for the short cut (Ellison Street extension) connecting with Spruce street near the bridge. Hiram Gould was the tollgate keeper, who in later life became a successful undertaker.

The first bridge was built of wood with closed boarded side railings, no roof. This venture of Mr. Crane turned out

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to be a good investment, as every one who crossed the bridge had to pay a penny toll. The penny toll continued for some years, before the town folk could get on the Falls ground free. Three bridges each in turn have spanned the chasm basin since that day. The Clinton bridge, the familiar one of the covered bridge we see in old time prints, was the second to span the chasm. In 1854 a new and substantial iron bridge was built across the cliffs, by which the news of the day said pedestrians can reach the celebrated ground in perfect safety, and enjoy nature in all her grandeur.

The tavern stood vacant for some time after Mr. Crane left it in 1839. The famous Cottage of after years occupied the site. Finally he sold it to Peter Archdeacon, including the falls ground. In his prosperous years Uncle Tim owned mill property along the raceway on Boudinot street. Here with others of the long ago, on summer evenings he could be found sitting on a bench at the side of the race, under the drooping branches of a weeping willow tree. He was a man of robust nature and over six feet tall. A commanding figure of his day, and known as a man of much energy and no little ability. In this respect he resembled the large rugged stature of Samuel Pope. Then in his declining years after he had quit the cottage at the Falls, fortune forsook him. He then built for himself a log cabin in the redwoods near by. It was at this cabin in the woods, he was found one morning in a helpless condition, and soon after passed away. All his days at his sawmill, at the falls and in his cabin were passed within sight of the beautiful river. He was buried in the little Dutch cemetery under the cliff within earsound of the rippling river he loved. Here he lay buried beside his wife. During the time Uncle Tim was at the cabin the hill on the westerly side of the river was thickly wooded, adding in summer much splendor; while the quiet waters like a mirror, reflected the charming picture. Uncle Tim, as he was called by those who knew him well, was the first chief of the Volunteer Fire Department in village days.

Now we go back to the part Sam Patch played in the placing of the first bridge over the Falls chasm. The crowd that had gathered on the exciting afternoon, were wondering what success would attend the placing of the bridge. Everything was going smoothly. The pulleys and guide ropes were securely fastened in place on each side of the chasm. The

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rolling pins were placed in position with everything made ready to pull the clumsy bridge into position. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when word was given to haul the bridge across the chasm. The crowd rent the air with cheers as the workmen began slowly to move the bridge. They had pulled it halfway over the chasm, when the unexpected happened. One of the rolling pins slid from the guide ropes falling into the chasm below. It was a tense moment of silence. All were expecting to see the big clumsy bridge topple over into the water below. As stillness hovered over the crowd, excitement again took hold when they saw a form leap quickly off the highest point of the cliff, near the old pine tree, to the chasm below. The body struck with a splash in the dark water, then swam to the wooden pin and brought it ashore. It was returned to the top of the cliff, placed again in position on the guide ropes, and the bridge safely pulled over the gap. The swinging of the first bridge across the chasm was the initial event of Sam Patch's career as a famous and daring jumper.

The old pine tree was about three feet in circumference and stood on the brink of the precipice. The dead trunk of the tree was still standing there in 1882. Yielding to the elements and to the knife of the relic hunter, not a vestige of it remains today.

From then on, imbued with the desire and plaudits of the crowds, Patch travelled about the country leaping from yardmasts and from topmasts, until attracted to Niagara Falls, as many adventurers have done since his time. It was early in October, 1829, that he jumped successfully from a shelving of rock on Goat Island into the swirling waters below the falls. No other man has succeeded in doing this feat, and lived to tell the story. By so doing he was a national celebrity. A few adventurers have gone over Niagara in different inventive contraptions used to guard their safety, but even some of these failed.

Patch next appeared in Rochester, N. Y., at Genesee Falls, where he had a scaffold built with a platform 125 feet high. He made a test jump from it successfully, before his exhibition jump which ended in death. Great crowds were on both banks of the Genesee river watching. He must have lost his balance, for it is said, his body turned sidewise in the fall, and struck the water in that position. He was not seen again,

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until his body was found at the mouth of the Genesee on the shore of Lake Ontario, frozen in a cake of ice. Friday, November 13th, 1829, ended the life of one of the most daring jumpers that ever lived.

For years the Falls have always been looked upon with pride as a pleasure ground by the citizens, and they expected it would always remain so. Some folks in the early days even demanded that free access should be had by all. The falls ground proper including all to the north of the river—that is to say, beyond the chasm where the bridge crosses—and as far north as the first reservoir or thereabouts, including the Valley of the Rocks, but not including the space from the chasm southward to the entrance gate; was owned by Archdeacon. This was bought in 1852, by John Ryle, the pioneer silk manufacturer, for \$1500, whose intention was to found an elegant home there. The work was begun, but the panic of 1857 overtook the enterprising man and the undertaking was abandoned.

Such criticism was engendered by some of the town people, over the possible loss of their pleasure ground, as they thought, but Mr. Ryle, realizing how much it meant to the town, conceived the idea of making this charming spot a public park. It was to be free for all comers, a breathing spot where the working people could come and enjoy themselves. To this end in the following years, when fortune again came his way, he expended large sums of money in adorning the place with rustic bridges, small rustic lookout towers, and other structures also laying out suitable walks and drives. This included two rustic stairs to the Valley of the Rocks. At the time the heights about the Falls were superb in their beauty, with groves of trees fringing the water's edge; indeed, one of the most delightful spots to be found in this region.

In time all this came to naught, for many of the visitors failed to regard the sign over the gateway to the entrance on Spruce street—"A pleasure for all should be protected by all." Finally the property was sold to the Passaic Water Company, and the city lost an opportunity of owning one of the most charming scenic spots east of Niagara. Three reservoirs were erected on the property by the company, but the ground was leased, and fortunately left open to visitors for many years after. The Cottage-on-the-Cliff (now gone) was a very pop-

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ular retreat where refreshing drinks were sold and one could enjoy the delightful surroundings in the shade of the trees.

The Falls continued to be in the spotlight as a pleasure resort from 1770, a record of one hundred and twenty years; with Neefie, Fifield, followed by Crane up to 1839, M. Brady in 1854, Labraux and Compt 1858, Van Voochris 1860, J. Haeberle 1880, and Henry Baum who quit the Cottage in 1890.

An event which attracted much attention was the orchestration organ installed in the cottage by Mr. Haeberle. It was a new innovation in musical instruments, and drew great throngs on Sundays and holidays to hear the fine music, in the large serving room of the cottage. In those days during the summer especially, the cottage took on a majestic air with its music hall and beer-garden combined. In those days the city was considered only a country town, where many picnics and target excursions from out of town were entertained here, and in the valley under the cliff. Here a rifle range was provided.

Since the days of Sam Patch, people have witnessed on this historic ground events of courage and daring. The most famous and marvelous was that performed by Mons. DeLave, on July 4th, 1860. He had advertised a program well calculated in breaking his neck. He took a portable stove out on the rope; that was stretched over the ravine from the front of the Cliff Cottage to Morris Mountain. Midway between the cliffs, he cooked an egg on the stove; but more remarkable still, he wheeled a man across in a wheelbarrow. In the evening he walked the rope blindfolded, enveloped in fireworks. With the De Lave exhibit, there was a program and ball given by the host Mr. Van Voorhis. Mr. Van Voorhis was in later years the genial proprietor of the United States Hotel, and it was located where the Citizens Trust building now stands.

Then on August 8th, 1879, Harry Leslie performed a similar feat. Still later in the eighties, George Dobbs in a less spectacular manner, walked on a rope stretched across the chasm.

While the Falls was mostly a place of pleasure events, it also had its tragedies. It had a record of accidents, many of which have been fatal.

The first victim of which record is made, has appeared

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so often in print, the tragedy of Mrs. Sarah Cummings, that it was briefly mentioned in a preceding chapter. But among others who lost their lives subsequently were William Whitaker who fell from a pole at the southern end of the chasm bridge. Then Miss Lamar, who fell in the raceway at the pitch in the rear of the Gun Mill, where also a little girl seven years old was drowned soon after. In the basin below the Falls, are many jagged rocks. Swimmers are attracted here when no water in volume, is falling over the precipice. Joseph Linkletter was drowned in the basin, when his body got jammed between two sunken rocks, and an aged man by the name of Gallagher also lost his life in the same spot.

"Mother Emmons," a well known character of early days, when superstition was more accepted than now, had the reputation of being a witch. She was a harmless old woman, but the children were afraid to pass her house, which was an old frame building, perched on ground near the precipice at the Falls. It was but a few steps from Little Falls road where the old water-gate house stood. This was shortly after the road was built across the ravine (Spruce Street). The wild nature of the place, and such other impressions that are conveyed to a child; of an old woman, whose haggard appearance and manner of dress, threw fear in the adolescent mind. So the children ran away when she approached them. The evil spirits being no respecter of persons, Mother Emmons met her death in the basin, having fallen from the rocks near the "big trunk" that conveyed the water to the raceway. It is generally supposed that the friendly old soul tumbled in the "big trunk" while trying to fill a pail or bucket with water, and lost her balance. At the time the water was twenty feet deep.

On June 8th, 1819, George Ray was upset from a boat, where he and two companions were fishing, in the basin below the Falls. This was a triple drowning as Owen Cooley and James McDonough were with him when the fatality occurred. On March 10th, 1850, two little girls were carried over the Falls in a boat. In July, 1859, four well known young men, Andrew Snyder, Henry Hopper, Weller Hoxsey and Samuel Ensign, went to the pool back of the John Ryle mill for a wash, but the water was not suitable. They then decided to go to the Falls basin for a swim. In so doing they climbed down the ravine along the "Devil's Pathway," a narrow ledge of

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rock at the base of the cliff. In summer it is passable, but at high water is covered by a foaming, raging rapid. The three boys who were good swimmers swam out to "Two Rocks," in the chasm below the Falls. Ensign who could not swim so well, was told by Weller Hoxsey that he better stay at the edge of the basin. When they returned to the spot Samuel Ensign was missing. What happened is conjecture, but the supposition is that he slipped or stumbled into the deep water. When they found the body, it showed a deep mark on the head badly bruised by the jagged rocks. The popularity of this young man brought a crowd of 3000 persons to the Falls to watch the men, in their efforts to find the boy. On the Thursday before, William Rawson lost his life in about the same spot*.

Others before and since have met death at the Falls. Three men who dared to go too near the edge of the river when it was in flood, were drawn in and dashed over into the abyss. All three men met death. They were James Grogan, William Horton and Henry Martin.

During the great flood of December, 1878, a strange and thrilling scene occurred just above the Falls. The river was a wild and swirling torrent. Walter Lee, a small lad, accompanied by a man named Jacob Hutchings, decided in the face of danger to drive a team attached to a lumber wagon, through the flood which submerged the Little Falls road beyond Spruce street. At this point the road runs very close to the river's edge, and the swift current during high water is dangerous. Suddenly the wagonbox was lifted from the bolster and swept into the torrent, and the river with incredible velocity.

Hundreds of people were about the Falls and on the chasm bridge, and on the Spruce street bridge, to witness the grandeur of the cataract. Those on and near the Falls bridge, saw the wagonbox coming swiftly down the river with its living freight. The man and boy cried out for help, but no rescue seemed possible; they were nearing the bridge, just below was the Society dam and a little farther the frightful plunge, which seemed inevitable. Must they go over the cliff into the seething abyss from which a deafening roar, and clouds of spray could be heard and seen for some distance.

*Young William Rawson was a nephew of John Ryle.

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Suddenly, as if by inspiration, James W. McKee, a beloved citizen, quickly conceived a plan of rescue. He rushed to the horse of Dr. P. A. Harris, who, with many others, had driven to the spot; tore the reins from their fastenings, ran back to the bridge. He looped his improvised life line, and called out to the man and boy to grasp it in passing. That was their only chance.

In view of the great velocity with which they were moving, their rescue was truly a marvel. Fortunately the river being high, both caught the frail strap on which hung two lives. For a few seconds the spectators looked on in breathless suspense, though many turned away in fear, thinking it would be unsuccessful. Then a great shout rent the air, as both man and boy were safely landed on the bridge.

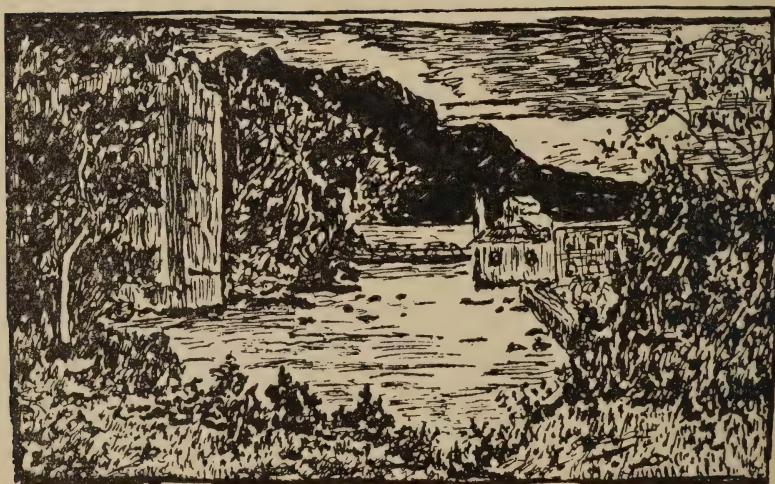
Many other casualties might be mentioned, but a brief reference to two more must suffice. One of the most mysterious happenings told to me over forty years ago on the spot where it happened, was the disappearance of Archie Brown in 1880. He being last seen on the Falls ground. A wide search was made for the young man, and after five weeks of diligent work was successful. His body was found wedged in between a ledge of rocks a little north of the cottage. It was extricated from the position it was in, and brought to ground level.

Whether he missed his footing and fell in the crevice accidentally or was placed there by unknown hands, remains a mystery. Fifty years ago a great many fissures and crevices were seen on the Falls ground that have since that time been filled in. In this tragedy foul play was suspected, though never proven. About the same time two young men did a Sam Patch act, by jumping from the chasm bridge on a Sunday in a spirit of bravado, one swimming out of the basin unhurt, the other named Dolan being drowned.



BASS ROCK Valley-of-the Rocks

Roswell Colt's favorite fishing spot.



BROOMSTICK BRIDGE

In the Valley of the Rocks.

CHAPTER SIX

Valley of the Rocks and Broomstick Bridge

A road leads to the Valley today, but what a different road it is. Once it was bordered by a green silven glade, at one side the steep rocky cliffs; on the other side the river crystal clear. Here and there deep pools of water, while in midstream stood Bass Rock. It too has disappeared by the action of flood waters through the years. It was given that name by Roswell L. Colt, whose favorite spot it was in fishing for rock bass. The rock was a few rods above the Society island which at that time was covered with a magnificent grove of trees, and added a bit of natural loveliness to the tree covered cliffs. The only picture of Bass Rock was done by T. W. Whitley, a local artist. This small painting hung on the wall in the Librarian's office in the old library building, and was destroyed in the great fire.

Above the valley could be heard the thundering noise of the water plunging over the precipice, and below the rushing water swishing over its rocky bed shut in on both sides by high cliffs. Under the trees of the beautiful ravine was an underbrush of shrubs and wild flowers. Not a sign of man's handiwork in the valley except, where he had walked; forming the twisted footpaths showing here and there in the woods. There was beauty and glory in the cliff bound valley of fifty years ago. The trees, shrubs and thicket along the paths were indeed cool and refreshing, hid in a cloud of trees. The narrow glade extended between the cliffs and river from the old slaughter house in the ravine to the basin of the Falls. By the rustic stairs you could descend down the side of the cliff to this retreat. For a few years the stairway and paths on the Falls ground, and in the valley below had been neglected, but in 1859 when Labraux and Compt were proprietors, they made many needed improvements. They put up a railing on the platform leading to the observatory on Cannon Heights, not very stout, but sufficiently so to prevent accidents. Formally this pathway had looked very "po-kerish."

The Cottage stairway leading to the Valley of the Rocks was one arranged and built in order to accommodate ladies with hoops—an improvement needed ever since the beautiful and graceful style of crinoline came in fashion. A style considered the acme of perfection nearly one hundred years ago.

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About the same time the following notice was printed in the papers: "Passaic Falls—The gate leading from the old burying ground to the quarry opposite. *Mr. Longwell's slaughter house, so has been thrown open to the public, and the way along the river is being somewhat improved so that visitors from the lower part of the city and Manchester can now reach the Cottage on the Cliff by the said way, and through the romantic Valley of the Rocks."

Originally the perpendicular cliffs, both on the Falls side and Morris Mountain side ran down to within a few feet of the river's edge. Here the Arbutus, Mountain Pink and Wood Violet grew. Here the wind sang lazily through the trees, touching the leaves into motion. Also, through the years many feet have pattered along in the cool, inviting shade, or waded in the clear stream, edging the wooded valley with loveliness.

On the opposite side of the river from the place called "Sandy Bottom" there stood untouched for many years a lofty cliff that reared its head, a wooded crest high above the neighboring heights. No longer does it give first greetings to the break of day, nor casting about its light and shade. Along the cliffs on the Falls side the rocks are disintegrating through the lack of nature's garment, vegetation. In the basin large rocks have fallen. Erosional action of sun, wind and rain are slowly crumbling these cliffs. However, this may be retarded, as it is noticed that trees and brush are again taking possession of the cliffs adding a touch of beauty to barren walls.

Could we but turn back the years to this place of beauty, where in the spring-time the fragrant breezes were laden with the scent of balsam and azelia. There one could watch the sun bursting its brilliant light over the tops of the tallest cliffs; then to soften in the cooling shadows of the foliage valley. What a pity that this is not a reality now. For most of us this wild glen is nonexistent. But memory is the mystical tide of the past which floods the present with thoughts that live. Except for memory, each day lived would be one day dead.

To sit in this valley in the shadow of rock or tree and feel the delightful coolness. To watch the sunbeams on the

*John Sprague Longwell, uncle of the author, was one time owner of the famous Godwin House, birth place of the city.

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rushing water and to look up to the sky-windows through the trees, was a scene which will remain unforgettable to those who knew it.

A quarry that operated here for a number of years did much of the damage that marred the beauty of the cliffs that remain. Bare rocks and gullies rift the mountain side. It is unfortunate that the march of civilization thus far has meant destruction to much of the scenic values. Part of the ravine was cut back from the river two hundred feet, or more, and the valley floor filled in with ash heaps and rubbish. This was levelled off and the place is now dotted with buildings, changing the former beauty to commonplace.

The old road to this wild glen entered the ravine from Totowa Road. At the right of the entrance to the valley was the old Dutch cemetery just below the point of rocks on Ryle avenue. The location was ideal as a resting place under the overhanging cliff. Across the road stood the old Dutch Church of Totowa. Here the pioneers of the congregation lay in peaceful rest. As the years rolled on the place was neglected. The old vault buried in the hillside was overgrown with vines and wild flowers, and the toppling headstones added to the unkept appearance. The generations that attended to it with loving care, have long since passed on. These markers were old, some bearing dates as early as 1771. It was the custom in the old days to carve on the headstones little quatrains of poetry in remembrance of the departed, some of which were amusing flights of fancy. Fifty years ago the old stones were removed to Laurel Grove and other resting places, and the ground turned into building property.

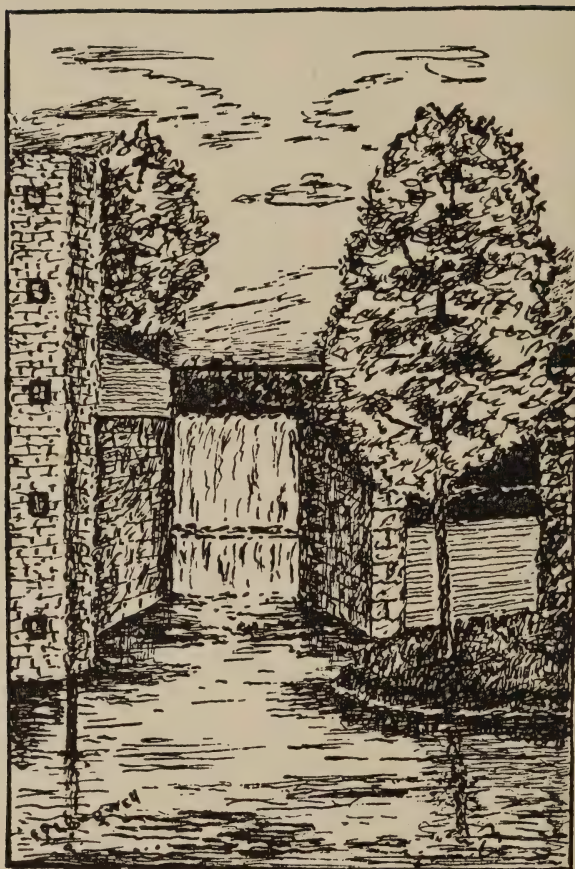
The river was a scene of beauty when the town was young. Then the banks of the river sloped down to the river's edge, for it was not narrowed nor-encroached upon by stone walls. Even the walls seen along the river, at a later date were neat in appearance. The gardens of homes adjoining the river, and the walls along its course covered with climbing vines and flowers. In days ago there was an old foot-bridge that spanned the river to the Valley of the Rocks, before that vicinity was spoiled of its rustic charm. It crossed the river to the valley immediately under the old observation tower, which stood on the edge of the cliff, adjoining the highest reservoir, at the Falls grounds. This bridge was built in the early fifties. While it was used by

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pedestrians to reach Totowa hill quickly, it was a private bridge crossing from the Gun Mill to the valley pumping station of the water company. It was built for the use of the workmen to go back and forth to work. It was called the John Ryle bridge, but bore the nickname—Broomstick Bridge, because of its frail stilt like construction. It was instrumental in getting the men to the pumping station quickly, as the main pipe-line crossed the river at this point. This assured a steady supply of water from the river at the base of the Falls. Later the pumphouse was removed, and the brick building built on the Falls grounds, near the rim of the cataract, was used to take the water from above the Falls.

The observation tower was of frame construction. The viewing floor was reached by climbing a spiral staircase. From this point one had a splendid view of the city, and for miles beyond. When a boy I knew this tower and stairway to the valley. I have used them both. This stairway to the Valley of the Rocks was a few feet east of the Cottage-on-the-Cliff.

Though this frail foot-bridge was placed in the rapids below the Falls where it received the full pressure of the swift moving water, it stood the test of each succeeding flood water. Nevertheless, each time the river was at flood, the wiseacres would say—"Lookout for Broomstick Bridge!" However, it withstood flood and ice against the predictions, that each succeeding flood or ice-jam would see it give way. A bridge with the simple nickname Broomstick stood firm against all freshets during its existence, until finally destroyed in a heavy ice-jam on February the eleventh 1867. Even then it was only partially wrecked. Later it was removed from the river.



Spillway at Gun Mill

Mill Street.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Along the Old Raceway

It is when we look back or return to old scenes, old paths that we feel the world's change, and realize how the shodaws of time have recorded with the dial of life. In this manner we are thinking of the changes in the old raceway as we once knew it. Even before our time it was not young, for it had dashed and sparkled on its way for nearly one hundred years. The water at the Falls had become a mighty power in industry.

The many who went back and forth to their work, crossed the little wooden bridges over the onrushing water of the flumes. Some of these folk are now scattered to all the winds, but be they dead or alive, in their dreams perchance, return in happy memory to those days when they worked in the old stone and brick mills along the waterway.

Water has an appealing charm that affects all of us. We wonder sometimes why it does, but perhaps it is because the reflections, or mirage bring to us that impelling force that makes the human mind to pause and think. What would those days have been without the old raceway? Time has dealt kindly with it. Many generations have passed on, still it retains some of its old time beauty. Yes, much is lost in scenic and historic value, for no place was more blessed in this manner, than the Passaic valley. Much of the opportunity to keep those values are gone.

The old raceway is now in decay. Its usefulness is on the ebb tide. The old shops and mills have changed their names and faces. The old dams and flumes are rickety. But those lovely old walls that hold the flow of water, and artificial cascades are part of the landscape; still adding that touch of color so much admired, in the days that have gone. Some day that remaining, too, will be missed—crowded out of the picture for modern power. Something more useful.

Many of the old buildings have disappeared, or have been transformed. The waterwheels no longer turn. The water in the race moves along as it did, but it moves slowly and dutiless; for it is relieved from work, it had performed for nearly one hundred and forty years. Gaiety it once had, and dash and sparkle, as it persued its way rapidly through the flumes. That power it made manifest in the hum of

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machinery is silent. It flows as one with the infirmity of age.

The first group of houses and mills built along this artery of water power, was the very beginning of our commonwealth we know today. The men who visualized that power made it possible. Following the race from the intake above the Falls, it starts on its way, forming a graceful turn at Spruce street where the old road seems to stop. Rising abruptly from the water's edge on the right, a wall of trap-rock of rustic beauty stands some thirty feet high. This projecting wall, was at an earlier date, part of Morris mountain. Looking through this vista Garret mountain is seen in the background. A beautiful view for those who pass that way, and have eyes to see it. To the left you look down to the Falls basin from the slope of filled in ground. This was part of L'Enfant gap which formed a deep gully, extending back from Spruce street nearly one hundred feet, and parallel with Little Falls road. Here the big trunk was built to carry the water over the ravine.

The only evidence that it existed, is this high wall of traprock. Here the raceway is diverted from the river into the artificial channel constructed over the deep ravine. This section of raceway at an earlier date, barely had room enough to pursue its way between Morris mountain; now level with the street, and the rock formation we see today at the upper side of the race at this point.

The back race was the first section built, and the first mill was built in 1794. The waterway in slow stages was then extended to Passaic and Mill streets; continuing along Mill street it entered the river, near the location of the old Phoenix mill.

Incidentally it was the largest construction work of this character attempted in colonial days. It is over one half mile in extent, taking in the upper, or back race with two levels reaching to Stony Road. The back race, middle and lower race make four successive descending levels, before reaching the river below the Falls. Then too, it was a counterpart attraction with the Falls, in the old days, before much of its scenic value was lost. Many followed its course, and in the early days visitors were impressed with its power, its rapid motion, its spillways, and dams, as it circled its way, from the base of Morris cut to the river.

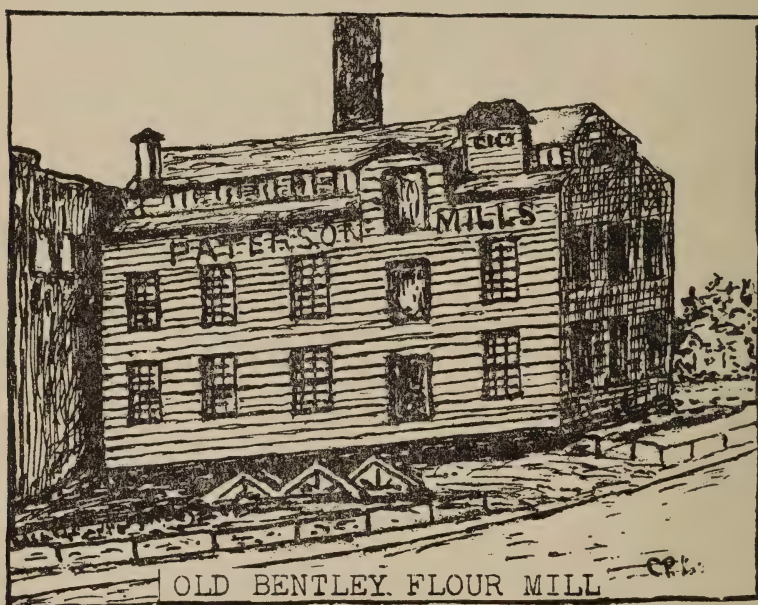
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Opposite to where it enters the river is Society Island, and other names it acquired through the years; such as Temperance Island. Here the Band of Hope, whose emblem was a white ribbon, was the forerunner of the W .C. T. U. met every Sunday afternoon beneath the large evergreen trees. It was a pleasure spot in the heat of summer days, for the thatch evergreens; mostly hemlock, was cooling and scented with pine needles. Its green banks kissed by the rapid flowing river. Today it is almost as barren as a desert, except for the buildings and sheds built there, The woods are gone, the axe having been laid to their roots, and the ground left desolate.

When the town was young many prominent homes faced the raceway. At that time Mill and old Boudinot streets was a fine residential section. Here too, along its course stately shade trees stood, and where the water slid down the dams; it seemed, as if the air all about was cooled by the powerful rush of water. On the little bridges spanning the race, over which the workers went to the mills; the town folk were attracted there, by this cooling influence. Here one could stand or sit in the shade of the trees, during the hot days of summer; watch the rushing water, and listen to the hum of the looms. Many, no doubt, have stood near the old wheel-pits, watching men work waist deep in water. These men were cleaning out the debris that had collected on the oak bottom of the pit. The removal of accumulated debris gave more power to the water wheel.

Now the water level is low; just flowing, and in summer aquatic plants lift their green spikes above the water, telling their story in mute silence, the languid flow of the stream. At the Spruce street intake are two neatly painted signs:—"KEEP OUT. NO FISHING ALLOWED," informs the public that it would be possible to catch there if one dare. About three hundred feet away is a rustic spillway, directly back of where the old Ivanhoe Paper Mill stood. The small brick shop is still there, a remnant of the paper mill explosion of a half century ago.

The rush and splash of this cascade of water is confined in a space of twelve feet. The falling water drops about ten feet to the flume, with an offset running back to where the Rogers locomotive shops used to be. Then it finds its way under the Spruce street culvert; following the old



At the foot of Prospect Street.

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private road to within a few feet of the old stone bridge, on Mill street. This private road has not changed much in appearance of the long ago, when it was a short cut to the Falls for the town's people, to witness tightrope performers and other feats of daring. This section forms the middle race. Part of the flume at this point takes a graceful turn to the right to Market street, following the lower race; where it again turns to follow Mill, Van Houten and Prospect streets to the river. The other section of the middle race, turning to the left on the hillside, was built about 1840 to supply water power for mills erected at Mill and Van Houten streets. At this point it turns to the left under the bridge, and road which is now a short route to Totowa, and McBride avenue. Here is a quiet secluded spot overshadowed by trees, and steep perpendicular rocks, a part of old Morris mountain. A pleasing view near the middle flume is Cannon heights which forms a prominent background to this secluded nook. Here bathers enjoy themselves in summer. The flume looked at from this point appears as an illusion to the eye, stops as if suspended in air above the old Gun Mill; but making a complete angle, the water falls over the spillway at the side of the old mill. The historic old mill where the first Colt revolver was made. After cascading over the spillway it flows past the old cotton mill on Boudinot (Van Houten), near Mill street. It was called Passaic Mill No. 1. This mill is also remembered as the mill that furnished the cotton duck for the sails of the racing yacht America. The first yacht to win the first International Cup Race. The sails were designed by a New York man, and the skipper who sailed the yacht was a Jerseyman; a member of the famous Stevens family, of Hoboken. This old brick mill stands within a few feet of the race.

From the second waterfall and wheel pit at the Gun Mill the water enters the lower race, near Van Houten street; following that thoroughfare, then turns in Prospect street. At this point two dams were located not far apart, where the race descends to river level. Here it passed the old Bentley flour and grist mill, a wooden building that stood at the river's edge, where the race enters the river. The older folks will recall the miller at the old mill; grinding grain into flour, amid flying dust, and watching the revolving water-wheel that made the power. Now forgotten, it was once a busy place where workmen were busy loading farmer's

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wagons with meal, or unloading grain to be milled. The old mill passed from the picture many years ago.

It is fitting to bring to mind one, L'Enfant who had much to do with the raceway, regardless of critics. Almost on leaving his work at the site of the Nation's Capitol, he was asked to draw the plans of the first manufacturing city, devised as such in the United States, and which today is one of the most important in existence, Paterson, performing wonders at the new town. The chief point was for him to transform into a city a spot where only ten houses were in existence, and to make of it an industrial one, by turning into use the Falls of the Passaic. His faithful French friend Roberdeau helping.

His influence and artistic ability brought beauty of life and an artful touch to the flumes and spillways. But his vision of Paterson as a great industrial center, was a dream of too great proportion at that time to be carried out. He was a tall distinguished man, a man well fitted artistically, but hampered by a temperment that caused him no end of trouble. As he planned here in the grand manner; he also planned the Nation's Capitol, the basic drawings for a city beautiful on the banks of the Potomac. But critics continued to play up too much his temperamental side, thus belittling his great artistic genius. With all due respect to Peter Colt who took over the work and did a good job, he undoubtedly made use of the least pretentious ideas of the engineer.

One is very much impressed with the symmetry of the plan. The perfection of line from the dome of the Capitol to the Washington monument and the Lincoln memorial, does not seem to vary an inch. The Lincoln memorial, a very beautiful and impressive building, is at the end of the moll. The beautiful moll and lagoon leading to it, bordered by a wealth of trees; where in the springtime the Japanese cherry blossoms complete an exquisite picture. Certainly a wonderful setting.

Nor was the first industrial city or the Nation's Capitol the only cities this much criticized man, planned from the ground up. Any visitor to Indianapolis familiar with the Capitol of the Nation instantly observes a striking similarity between the two. Alexander Ralston, surveyor who carried the

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chains and placed the stakes, while L'Enfant fixed the lines and curves of this city of magnificent distances. Where in the year 1821 he carved out the soil, cleared space in the Hoosier wilderness, and the result, perhaps, the handsomest city between Philadelphia and Denver.

Our National Capitol is a city of beautiful circles extending out like the delicate web of a spider, with the Capitol building as the main axis, from which the streets and avenues radiate.

Just across the Potomac is the beautiful silent city, Arlington. Here in front of the old Lee mansion is a tomb. A tomb that is unnoticed. Major Charles L'Enfant lies buried there, given his rightful place at last after lying in a neglected grave for eighty years. It was in 1912 when his dust was taken from the old grave and now rests in the National Cemetery. It overlooks the fine city he first saw in his dreams, and loved so passionately to the end of his disappointed life.

The building of the raceway was considered a great piece of engineering work in Colonial days, and it was finished as demands were made for more water power. The last section being completed about fifty years after the project was started in 1791. The advent of steam and now the age of electricity, have replaced its usefulness. What of its future? However, it is good to remember the historic raceway; as one of the main factors, which successfully placed Paterson on the map, also the famous men interested in it.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Fishing in the Old Days Below the Falls

Fishing at the falls and other places along the river, was a source of gastronomic revenue to a number of people in the early days. Before the white man came, it was one of the favorite fishing grounds of the Indian. The redman came up the river in canoes to fish, between the high cliffs of the Falls basin. Here they caught large numbers of fish. It remained their important fishing place until the whites took possession. And for many years the Indians of the neighborhood protected their fishing rights from other tribesmen. Likewise, the white settlers who bought from the Indians in the early years of the 18th Century did the same.

The Indians' skill in the art of fishing as well as hunting, was well known, and many of their methods copied by the early settlers to their enjoyment and profit.

In the spawning season fish came up the river to the chasm in great numbers where they were stopped in the basin below the high cliffs at the Falls. Here the Indian placed weirs, or traps, and other devices to catch the fish. As a diversion they also used the canoe, one brave doing the paddling, while another caught the fish by hand with a scap-net. The basin in those days extended back beyond the present Falls basin, about one hundred feet at the southside of the cliffs; forming a fissure, or gap, fifty feet wide, known as L'Enfant gap. When the river was at high water, a fall of water entered this gap as well as the one known today as the Falls basin.

Many kinds of salt water fish came upstream in the spring season, sporting themselves in the extended basin under the falling water which brings with it from above plenty of food in the leaves, earth and mire.

The settlers when they acquired the land from the Indians accepted the importance of fishing rights, as part of their legal title to the land. So all land adjacent to the Falls basin, and for some distance along the river, when sold or it came into their possession as heirs, saw to it that the fishing rights were protected.

Halmagh Van Gieson and Robert Van Houten in their deed of August 6th, 1804, was this clause, "especially except

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and demanded of and from the grantee's an equal proportion with them the said Halmagh Van Gieson and the said Robert Van Houten, so as to amount to each of them a tenth part of as much shad caught at the fishery at the Great Falls aforesaid as might be caught at the same, as may serve their father John Van Gieson for his family's use during his lifetime, or while he demanded the same."

And in his will dated October 10th, 1808, John Van Gleason expressed the wish that the fishing place at the Great Falls should be divided among his children.

In the early days during the spring run of shad, many people were at the river for the event, ready to obtain their share. On April 1st, 1829, a notice was printed in the local papers, stating that a few days before that date a shad had been seen in the river near the Totowa bridge at the Passaic Hotel.

The fisheries were, however, last mentioned in terms in a deed from John M. Crane and wife, to Timothy B. Crane, dated July 31st, 1830. This was a few years after Timothy Crane acquired possession of the Falls ground.

Every spring those interested "beat" for shad. Shad, seabass and rockfish were caught in abundance of which as many as five hundred were caught at a time. The methods of fishing in those days was so ingenious that it would startle the State wardens if practiced now. These fishermen in a crude way practicing in Indian fashion, would fasten saplings together, end-to-end, and tying ropes to the extremities throw the trees into the water, letting them spread out. Then they would draw them down to a sort of pen made by building loose walls of stone and rock out into the river.

A basin would thus be formed with a small opening upstream. In this the fish would take refuge. Then the opening was closed, and the catch of fish taken out at pleasure.

It is known that the Indian made use of nets made of milkweed bark. These nets were about five feet long and three feet broad. These nets were placed together in the water, in a semi-circular form, making a pocket through which the fish entered the trap. Thus easily caught, they were dispatched. The spear was also used for both fishing and hunting. Much more methodical than the placing of saplings and

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stone; the nets were easily managed and could be taken up and used anywhere in the river the redman decided to fish.

One of the best places for fishing below the gap at the great falls, was called "deep hole." This was midway in the river between where the Arch street bridge is now, and the present location of the Straight street bridge, or, about where the Dark brook entered the river at Manhattan mill.

At the time when the fisheries along the river flourished there was no dam at Dundee, and at times large sea-fish would wander up the stream. About one hundred years ago a large rock occupied a place in midstream a short distance above the island. This was the favorite retreat and fishing place of Roswell L. Colt. T. W. Whiteley, a local artist, knowing this to be the favorite retreat of Mr. Colt, painted a picture of it and called it Bass Rock, in his honor. Speaking of the artist Whiteley, brings to mind two of the Whiteley paintings I owned, which unfortunately were lost with other valuable material in the great fire of 1902. One was a landscape scene on Garret Rock, the other a picture in humorous vein depicting a farmer wheeling a wheelbarrow to market filled with produce. The story of this picture is this—this man was a great lover of his horses, and in the fear that his team would catch the cholera, wheeled his produce to market. It represented the act of a prosperous farmer of the time. The picture was painted about the time of the cholera epidemic here in 1832. The pictures were both oil paintings painted on thick bristol-board.

Let's get back to the subject of fishing, after diverting to a subject just as important. The largest fish ever taken from the Passaic river at the village of Paterson, was caught August 31st, 1817. On occasions, large fish have made their way to the basin at the falls. But this one was so big that it made news. It was a sturgeon weighing one hundred and thirty pounds. This species of fish sometimes attains a length of ten feet and weighing as much as five hundred pounds. They are very sluggish and can be taken without much trouble! They are not popular as a food fish, although in the early days smoked sturgeon could be bought in the market. The eggs of this and other large fish are used in making caviar.

The following description of the event was published in the Bergen Express and Paterson Advertiser, under the date of Sept. 3rd, 1817, with the heading:

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THE MONSTER TAKEN

"He made his appearance yesterday toward evening, and again this morning where a number of the inhabitants of this village collected and assailed him at all points with weapons of almost every description, viz: sticks, stones, clubs, spears, bayonets, pitchforks and various other kinds of instruments with which they overpowered him. Surely the dexterity, agility and daring of the fortunate captors cannot be surpassed by the inhabitants of any other village; one of the assailants had the temerity to even get astride of him in the water, while another seized him by the throat and gills, and thus dragged him on shore. He certainly was the greatest monster of his kind that ever appeared in our waters, a sturgeon measuring upwards of seven and a half feet in length and weighing over one hundred weight, was by their unparalleled enterprise, drawn on shore by hand and carried through the town in triumph, to the astonishment of a number of citizens and others who never had witnessed a similar phenomenon, and probably never will again . . .

"He was taken a few rods below the basin of the Falls of the Passaic, where, it is said, two or three others are lurking, which will no doubt be also taken as soon as they shall make their appearance in shoal waters, which they must necessarily do if they attempt to return to the salt water from whence they came, unless the river should again become suddenly swollen by heavy rains, as was the case when they ascended it a few days since."

When the Dundee dam was built in the year 1858, this kind of fishing was destroyed, as progress beyond that point was effectually barred to the shad and other deep sea fish that ascended the river in the spawning season. Only on one or two occasions since then has a breach in the dam made entrance way for the fish into the stream above.

In those early years the banks of the river sloped down to the water's edge, as it was not encroached upon by stone walls. Even the walls built along the bank of the stream at a later date, were neat in appearance. Beautified by the

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climbing vines and flowers, it contributed greatly to the attractiveness of the river. Many of the residents living near the bank of the river had stone steps leading from their yards to the water's edge. Here they had their trim, flat-bottomed boats anchored and ready for the pleasure of rowing and fishing.

Sixty years ago many of these boats were seen along the river from the Falls basin to Dundee. At the time the water was crystal clear and the fishing good. While the fishing was better in the days when tide-water reached the Falls basin, fishing was still good for fresh water fish, before impurities in large quantities entered the stream, polluting the water.

In those days, night fishing was a popular sport. The scene on the river after nightfall was a weird and fascinating spectacle, as the slow splashing movement of oars were reflected on the water, by the torchlights of the fishermen. Flickering lights that danced here and there upon the water like myriads of large fireflies.

Spearing for eels and shirring for suckers was an exciting pastime in the days before fishing laws became effective, with no fish to catch. Many of the men who enjoyed this sport were expert with the shirring-pole and spear. The pole had a loop of copper wire that was securely fashioned in a circle with a loop-knot fastened at the end of the pole. This was lowered in the stream and the light from the torch located the fish to be caught. The loop was deftly placed in position, and with quick action it was exceptional if the fish was not caught in the shir.

